

RECONSTRUCTING THE ROLE OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN FEMALE TO
EMPOWER HER CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT USING
FAITH BASED INITIATIVES

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ABSTRACT

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by

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The model's focus is family preservation and restoration through academic and spiritual education. The methodology is to utilize a case study to develop an education model that addresses the specific circumstances of families residing in Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Projects. The hypothesis is that the present model of adult education does not support the needs of women living in HUD projects. Doulas Ministries Inc. was founded to provide a model that addresses inter-generational illiteracy and family enrichment interactively by pairing the General Education Diploma program with a curriculum designed specifically for families residing in Miami-Dade Housing Developments.

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Special thanks to Mrs. Bertie J. Hall for keeping me aware of the danger of getting ahead of myself and God.

To Linda Adams, a long-time friend and a genius, who has always taken the time to listen, laugh, and encourage while addressing my word processing issues, thank you.

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Most importantly, to the residents of Circle Plaza Rainbow Gardens Housing Development and the Miami-Dade Housing Authority, thanks for allowing me to expose my weaknesses and your strengths.

PREFACE

For a long time all efforts to write a theoretical foundation for reconstructing the role of the African-American female to empower her children failed because a foundation paper needed just that, a foundation. It was like trying to make a sharp left hand turn while cruising at 90 miles an hour. It just could not be done. Why was it that an individual could not plainly and simply state the basis for a ministry she knew God has called her to? After much prayer, this author came to know that it was because a completely open and honest self-examination had not yet been done. Upon completion the examination revealed the importance of the mother's role in empowering her children, especially her daughters. A final project emerged when the importance of a mother in the life of her children was fully understood and appreciated.

The foundation upon which the project proposal would rest would be the point where ministry stands in the light of hermeneutics, history, theology, academics, and the daily Christian walk. This was the point at which this author had to reconcile childhood memories and lifetime steps with her call to ministry. It was a time of reflection, a time when she would see the need to educate parents in their roles because of the pain she had endured. Revisiting that time was painfully necessary and spiritually therapeutic because it was at that point that she was validated and restored. This journey was this author's milestone.

There are two bonds that cannot be broken: first, the bond between God and humanity; second, the bond between a mother and her child. These bonds are so closely related that mothers not only personify God's image and likeness but must also replicate God's example of care and work in the womb (cf. Jer.1: 5; Is. 49:1-5). Mothers mold, teach, constrain, nourish, and guide children who are in the womb of the garden (home) in such a manner that these children will enter fully into the plans and purposes of God, the true *Chavvah* (life-giver, Eve).

In this dissertation, mothers are more than those beings who have the physical ability or the spiritual sanction of marriage to procreate. Mothers are, of necessity, not just biologically bonded to all human life but spiritually bonded, too. Mothers are those females, even single females who should recognize, accept, and function as one who loves, nurtures, molds, teaches, guides, educates, supports, and chastises those children whose spiritual, physical, moral, intellectual, and comprehensive growth for which she assumes responsibility, if not by flesh then by spirit. Mothers are more than wombs and wives; mothers are paradigms of the God-Mother.

This author's ministry and dissertation focuses on the role of the African-American female in the family based on the three epithets of the female in the creation narrative of Genesis. These three epithets reveal God as the paradigm for all women. This author was inspired to develop a model of empowerment of the African American female using Faith Based Initiatives. The model is known as "The Chavvah Project."

The Chavvah Project placed this author in an uncomfortable and inescapable position in which motherhood had to be discussed, remembered, and confronted. Mothers can be natural, surrogate, and even step. Each epithet of the first woman reflects this spiritual connectedness. Mothers must exercise dominion, enter help meet relationships, and reproduce /bond themselves spiritually through Christ and literally through the bonds of Holy Matrimony. Motherhood is more than a paradigm based on names given the female in the creation narrative. Motherhood is an issue this writer has evaded all her life, only to run into while answering God's call to empower women, children, and family for restoration and preservation. Fortunately, neither the biological process of having children nor the act of marrying a man with children makes a female a mother. Coming to understand this reality fully divinely empowered this author to minister to women, children, and family for preservation and restoration. As God revealed God' persona to me, a paradigm for mothers emerged and a search for evidence of God's love where mother, stepmother, and other mother figures proved to be missing and inadequate.

In this dissertation, mothers are more than humans who have the spiritual ability or marital sanction to procreate, to love, and to nurture. Mothers are those females, even single females who function as someone who loves, molds, teaches, guides, educates, supports, and chastises those children whose spiritual, physical, moral, intellectual, and comprehensive growth for whom she has accepted responsibility. Mothers are those African-American females who function as heads of households and seek to empower their sons and daughters. Mothers are those African-American females who conform to the paradigm of Chavvah, which will be delineated in chapter 3.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my children, Zona Eliese and Michael Sean. Your love and support have been a source of strength and inspiration. You are the reason I strive to be a Chavvah.

And it is dedicated to my best friend, Robert, whose friendship, loyalty, and love have been constant, dependable, and unshakable throughout both good and bad times. Thanks and I love you back.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

KJV	King James Version
NIV	New International Version
ETC.	et cetera
RSV	Revised Standard Version
OT	Old Testament
TWOT	Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament

WHO IS MY MOTHER?

INTRODUCTION

THE FAITH BASED INITIATIVE

On January 29, 2001, President George W. Bush issued Executive Order #13198, which began what has come to be known as the Faith Based Initiative. The faith based community was invited to enter into partnership with the federal government. This was to be a partnership in which the faith based community could compete in the marketplace for federal dollars and provide services to America's less fortunate. President Bush said,

"As I said in my inaugural address, compassion is the work of a nation, not just a government. It is more than the calling of politicians; it is the calling of citizens. It is citizens who turn mean streets into good neighborhoods. It is citizens who turn cold cities into real communities. It is one great goal of my administration to invigorate the spirit of involvement and citizenship. We will encourage faith-based and community programs without changing their missions. We will help all in their work to change hearts while keeping a commitment to pluralism.¹ (Bush 2001, 1)

The formal history of the Faith-Based Initiative began on August 22, 1996, when President William Jefferson Clinton signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (Prwora) of 1996, which was meant to end the long standing, failed system of welfare in America. This act transferred responsibility from the federal to state governments by allotting specific amounts of money to the states for specific time periods.

¹ President George W. Bush, *Remarks by the President in Announcement of the Faith-Based Initiative, Executive Order # 19138*. [order online] (Washington, D.C., January 2001). Available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/>.

The fundamental idea of the PRWORA was to end generational dependence on government and promote individual responsibility by removing people from welfare after providing ample time for job training and transition. PRWORA contained a provision called “Charitable Choice,” which allowed states to enter into contracts that would allow faith-based organizations to provide direct social services to people in need. Immediately, issues arose concerning the First Amendment of the Constitution, which states:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”² This law, which means that a 'wall of separation' exists between church and state, has historically been understood as a mandate against cooperation between church and state. However, it is this author’s opinion that both church and state, are of God. And, this author supports the wall of separation, especially because heretics and hypocrites often frequent both church and state. The Interfaith Alliance stated

“To date, the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment of the Constitution has been interpreted to mandate that no federal or state tax dollars should fund “pervasively sectarian” organizations. Religious ministries who want to provide social services with government funds must: Incorporate separately from their sponsoring religious institutions, refrain from religious activities and proselytizing during the government-funded program, provide an environment that is free from religious symbols and doctrine where they seek to operate their social service.

In other words, the Establishment Clause has been used to ensure that religious organizations secularize their services and premises as conditions of government funding so that all Americans, regardless of race, gender, or religious affiliation, can take advantage of the publicly funded services.”³ (Interfaith Alliance 2004, 1)

² U. S. Constitution, article 1.

³ Legislative Advocacy Center Website, *Position of The Interfaith Alliance on Charitable Choice Legislation*. [article online] (Washington, D.C., May 2002) Available at <http://www.interfaithalliance.org/>; Internet accessed 27 May 2004.

Relying on his faith in God and his dedication to the United States of America, President George W. Bush recognized these barriers to free expression of human love and compassion and, true to his campaign promise boldly took the steps to eliminate them. It was God's grace that led a politician to reason that the Establishment Clause of the United States Constitution, which states "Congress shall make no law respecting and establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof"⁴ is also the law that prohibits government control of the religious environment's artifacts, symbols, or signs that faith-based organizations had been required to remove in order to compete with secular organizations for government funds under Charitable Choice legislation. If the church was not attempting to alter the government or proselytize people using government funds, why should the government tell the church what to have on the wall of a building the church owns? President Bush remarked, "As long as there are secular alternatives, faith-based charities should be able to compete for funding on an equal basis and in a manner that does not cause them to sacrifice their mission. And we will make sure that help goes to large organizations and to small ones, as well. We value large organizations with generations of experience. We also value neighborhood healers, who have only the scars and testimony of their own experience."⁵

⁴ U. S. Constitution, article 1.

⁵ President George W. Bush, *Remarks by the President in Announcement of the Faith-Based Initiative, Executive Order # 19138*. [order online] (Washington, D.C., January 2001). Available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/>.

Although not everyone was pleased with President Bush's order, there is no question about the impact it has already had on social services and health care in the United States. Christian organizations now stand alongside government in helping to meet the needs of the less fortunate in America. I am sure that Thomas Jefferson and all the Founding Fathers would approve of this alliance.

CHAPTER ONE

WHY DO WHAT YOU DO?

“Question: What is the motive of your ministry? What is the motive of your ministry? What is the reason you have become an appointed spiritual leader in a changing society? What is the motive of your ministry? What is the basis of being an under-shepherd amid the spiritual and social tornadoes that touch down in our homes and neighborhood and our churches all over the world? Come on now I've asked a question and have not heard a response yet. What is the motive of your ministry? What is the purpose behind your ascending the pulpit to herald the good news of the Son of God? What is the motive of your ministry? What is the *raison d'être* that supports a ministry that makes a difference in a ~~moral~~ immoral turbulent time? What is the motive of your ministry? What is behind the impulse to help people pursue answers to life's incomitable questions? What is the reason for helping others sort out alternative lifestyles and competing paths of fulfillment? What is the motive of your ministry? What is the cause you open doors for others, who yearn for fellowship and conciliation with God. That is, the intent of reaching beyond your needs to see to the needs of others? What is the motive of your Ministry? Why do you seek out and save the lost? Why do you go to cheer the fallen and visit the sick and set at liberty the captives and preach the good news to the poor and bind up the broken hearted? What is the motive of your ministry? ...Why is it that you leave the 99 and go after the one? Why do you preach in season and out of season? And preach when you are tired? And preach when you want to preach and preach when you do not feel like preaching? Why do you pray when you do not want to pray no more, pray for those you would rather hurt than help? Help someone else's child when you can barely help your own? Tell me, why do you stay where you are not wanted and leave where you are celebrated and love? Go where you are sent to tell what they do not want to hear, to make them do what they do not want to do and go where they do not want to go? What is the motive for your ministry?”¹ (McKenzie 2002)

¹ Bishop Vashti M. McKenzie, “The Right Reason” (closing worship sermon at United Theological Seminary’s Intensive The Church’s Ministry to the family, on February 1, 2002 in Dayton, Ohio.

On February 1, 2002, in Dayton, Ohio, Bishop Vashti McKenzie aimed this challenge at the very heart of everyone attending United Theological Seminary's intensive on "The Church's Ministry to the Family." Deep within this individual, there was a thorough spiritual self-examination already taking place. And the examination question was "What is the reason you have chosen women, children, and family restoration and preservation through education as the focus of your ministry?" The answer was thought to be by personal choice. What was not known was that this ministry focus was not a personal decision but a decision of the sovereign God? Many times while writing her Spiritual Autobiography, God re-confirmed that the focus of women, children, and family restoration and preservation through education was not a personal choice but the result of God's sovereignty and providence, which was using various circumstances and trials throughout her life to bring her to a moment when God's call to minister to women and children would be heard and answered. Many times that call had manifested itself in her life, yet an understanding of it and its impact on her life was not fully comprehended and appreciated until she had to complete a Untied Theological Seminary assignment called a Spiritual Autobiography. She had experienced many up and downs, successes and failures, defeats and victories, and all these along with many other factors had been orchestrated or allowed by God for ushering her into ministering to women, children, and family for restoration and preservation. These reflections on her life improved her because they required visiting some places, events, and people from her past. Not all the places, events, and people could be located in the well-lit areas of her mind. Some had to be visited in the dark recesses where the bogeyman of pain, tears, and repression lives shadowed from the light of truth.

The Spiritual Autobiography contained a requirement that would cause one to wrestle and contend with the requirement of self-examination. When reading and judging this document, it is important to remember this; otherwise you may never come to know that not only is this author far less than this narrative portrays her to be but also that the people, places, and events that shaped her are far more important than these words may show them to be. Going through the process of reviewing her life, interviewing her parents, and constructing a Spiritual Autobiography improved her while teaching her that real improvement is painful.

While advancing through the curriculum at United Theological Seminary, she was also blessed with some delightful moments of reflection: moments that would shape this treatise on *Reconstructing The Role Of The African American Female To Empower Their Children's Development Using Faith Based Initiatives*. Moments that would be like unto the tragedies and comedies of Shakespeare, moments you will laugh, only to learn later that you should have cried, moments that made her appreciate the thin line between right and wrong and between joy and sorrow; moments with questions that would be answered by serving the women, children, and families God called her to serve.

The context of the ministry is Perrine, Florida, a small, predominantly African-American community located in South Miami-Dade County. As one of the county's oldest African-American settlements, Perrine was named after Dr. Henry H. Perrine, a botanist who attempted to establish a resort in the area in the early 1830's. Later, after Dr. Perrine died without ever establishing the resort of which he dreamed, his heirs donated the land to the Florida East Coast Railroad, and by 1900 the community had a school, a post office and a general store.

Today, 100 years later, 95 percent of the population of Perrine is African-American and is characterized by low literacy, high poverty, and an increasing young population. “Between 1980 and 1990 the poverty rate for persons grew from 41 to 55 percent. The percentage of families in poverty grew from 36 to 51 percent.”⁷ Considering that 45 percent of Perrine’s population is less than 19 years old and that 12.4 percent of them are less than five years old, it becomes painfully obvious that the family in general and children in particular are being severely impacted by the cycle of poverty that characterizes Perrine. One reason for such high levels of poverty is that 35 percent of all the households in Perrine have no workers, which is about three times the county’s average. Last, even though culturally Miami-Dade County has grown at a remarkable rate, Perrine has not. It remains a large group of African-American people trapped in a cycle of poverty. “46 percent of all households with income had incomes below \$10,000 compared to 19 percent in Miami-Dade. And, 42.9 percent of the households in Perrine are headed by females.”⁸ There are many causes for the low incomes of the people living in Perrine, but the most unmistakable cause is a lack of educational attainment. “The educational attainment of Perrine residents over 18 lagged well behind the county average. A high 48 percent of these adults had not completed high school.”⁹ This statistic not only reflects the life experiences of the adults but also will become a factor in the life experiences of their children. Education and income are linked; the higher one is the higher the other can be. Income indicates poverty level, which is related to education.

⁷ Miami-Dade County Department of Planning Development and Regulations, Research Division Report, *Perrine Revitalization Area Profile* (Miami, Florida: 1998), 1.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 23.

In Perrine, “68 percent of the households with children are headed by a single female and 75 percent of those with children are below the poverty level.”¹⁰ The large number of households headed by single females indicates that marriage is not a priority; in fact, the percent of households headed by single African American females in Perrine is three times the county's average. The need for these mothers to improve their educational level is also supported by the fact that jobs that pay above the minimum wage require a high school diploma, which many of the residents of Perrine do not have. We have a statistical picture of the context of the ministry to which the author has been called. It is “High poverty (50.7%), high child population (12% are less than five years old), high youth population (13.3% ages 5-9), high African American Female headed households (43%), high number of low incomes <than \$15,000 (61.3%), high rate of welfare recipients (29.3%), high child poverty (75%), and a high school dropout rate of 48%.”¹¹ This statistical picture makes clear the need to reconstruct the role of the African-American female to empower her children’s development. What some may view as a wasteland, this author sees as fertile ground for ministry and now understands why the ministry is a threefold ministry (women, children, and family). There is no longer a need to wonder why women and children were specified separately rather than addressed within the unit of the family. Women and children now define the family, or at least a new kind of family; a family without a father, a family without a mature adult, a family without a high school graduate, a family without earning power, a family characterized by illiteracy and poverty and without intervention will remain as such, a family this author knew very little about when she began this project.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

If the Contextual Analysis caused this author to question why was she being sent into a context where fathers are absent and mothers are present (a context completely divergent from her childhood and life experience), then the Spiritual Autobiography would provide the answer. That is because at the end of writing it, she asked, “Why is it that throughout this narrative my father is so prominent, while my mother, though alive and well, is almost non-existent?” She wondered if the near-invisibility of her mother symbolized anything, perhaps something traumatic and still repressed. After all, the Spiritual Autobiography certainly demonstrated the prominence of her father's house, which highlighted the absence, even the non-existence of her mother's house. And, as if this were not enough to grapple with, God sent her to minister in a context in which she could not rely upon her life's experiences as she had done so often in the past. Her experience was that her father had always been there, except for that one time when she was ten years old. He had argued late that night with her step-mother and left the house, walking. He was gone for 21 days, which seemed like an eternity to her. Etched in her memory is that Saturday morning when her he returned and how she begged him to promise that if he ever left again he would take her with him. Funny, she did not ask him not to leave again, only to take her if he did. Today, standing in the context of Perrine,

. she wonders how many little girls in Perrine, Florida, have seen their fathers walk away and remained gone longer than an agonizing 21 days. God has sent this author to a context where the children are happy about, numb, or just plain oblivious to their absent fathers. How would these girls come to know their value if there were no father threatening to annihilate anyone or anything that attempted to harm them?

“Absent fathers are defined as those who do not interact with their children on a regular basis and consequently do not play a significant role in their development. Divorce, death, and abandonment are all forms of absence but nevertheless affect female development differently. The age at which a daughter loses her father is meaningful since it influences her perception of males, the world, as well as her academic development ...Security regarding females and their father is a key element since it greatly shapes their development. Women without father figures lack a sense of protection and as a result may become discouraged. Examples of this phenomenon are teenage pregnancy, dropping out of college, never attempting college, and low self esteem.”¹² (Krohm and Bogan 2001)

Indeed, absent fathers are a problem, and the need for their return is a task worthy of undertaking; however, this discussion centers on reconstructing the role of the African-American female such that she is able to empower her children. The United States Department of Education reported “That 48% of the African American Females that have dropped out of school and are now single parents heading 43% of the homes that contain 75% of the children in Perrine.¹³ All of these young children are at risk of becoming high school dropouts / single parents and are therefore candidates to continue the cycle of illiteracy and poverty to which their mothers have fallen prey. The aim of this endeavor is to reconstruct the role of the female in the African-American family in such a way that she is empowered to protect her children from the many ills traditionally thought to be warded off by watchful protective fathers. This effort is not to displace or substitute males with females or fathers with mothers; it is to empower single parenting females.

¹² Franklin B. Krohn and Zoe Bogan, “*The Effects Absent Fathers Have On Female Development and College Attendance*,” [online] Available at <http://www.highbeam.com/library/doc/>; Internet; accessed 24 May 2004.

¹³ U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Dropout Rates in the United States: 2000, National Center for Educational Statistics, Statistical Analysis Report (November 2001), Available from <http://nces.ed.gov/pub2001/>. This and other government documents cited in this work are available through the Government Printing Office: accessed 24 May 2004.

Consider the following incident taken from this writer's Spiritual Autobiography.

One Saturday morning, this author's friend Louise called and asked her if she had read or heard about what happened the night before. She sat eagerly waiting to hear some juicy gossip about someone who had attended the football game the night before. Louise told her that Katherine McGee, a classmate, was shot and killed by her father because he found out that she was pregnant. Most of what was said in the conversation after that is a blank. The next memories are of radio, television, and newspaper accounts of the incident. While there was never a question about the guilt of Mr. McGee, the way the adults spoke of the incident indicated that whether or not he was wrong, was open to interpretation. The impact of this incident was overwhelming. This was the lesson that taught that being guilty and being wrong were two different things for adults. Even adults that said the incident was a tragedy seemed reluctant to express too much of an opinion that favored Katherine. Perhaps they feared that their own children might see their sorrow for Katherine as approval of the behavior that led to her pregnancy. This author's father, whom had been assumed incapable of such a dreadful act never once caused this author quite a bit of confusion because not once, at least not in her presence, expressed disdain for Mr. McGee's actions or sorrow for Katherine death. To this day, shame is still felt because of her father's apparent indifference.

The Monday following the funeral was emotionally draining. Mrs. D. T. Johnson, our homeroom and English teacher, was the only teacher who spoke of Katherine. She reminded the class of Katherine's Honor Roll status, her consistent 3.8 GPA, and her excellent conduct grades. Mrs. Johnson then spoke with an honesty that threatened her job and challenged our innocence.

She held the first and only sex education lecture that this author ever received from the Duval County Public School System. Her lecture ended with the words, “Katherine McGee was not the only sexually active girl in school, and Mr. McGee was not the only crazy father with a high school daughter.” Then Mrs. Johnson just sat there and cried. God used this 30-year-old tragedy to bring about an appreciation for the need to reconstruct the role of the African-American female to empower the development of her children. This was the ministry’s defining moment for this author’s call to minister to women, children, and family for restoration and reservation. It was the moment her call met her context of broken homes, dreams, and spirits and then bonded with painful teaching memories summoned by her Spiritual Autobiography and produced a synergy. According to the Handbook of the Doctor of Ministry Program at United Theological Seminary, a Synergy Paper connects context and calling at an intersection, and produces a single, doctoral focus. For this author that synergy is *Reconstructing The Role of The African American Female To Empower Her Children's Development Using Faith Based Initiatives*. The ministry is to serve women, children, and family for restoration and preservation; the context is Perrine, Florida, The following defines the intersection.

The characteristics that once defined a family unit have changed fundamentally during the latter half of the twentieth Century, and these changes have presented both the government and the church with unprecedented challenges. Women work; fathers are absent; babies are cloned; fertility banks accept deposits and withdrawals; corporeal punishment is neither acceptable in the public forum nor in the private home; and becoming a high school dropout and a teenage mother is now a much sought after, ill-fated status symbol.

Thirty-year old women have fifteen-year-old daughters who have three-year-old sons. Children are as likely to have their first encounter with drugs in the home as they are in the streets. And, far too many parents are recovering from something they have abused or from someone who has abused them. Absent fathers and crack mothers are both terms not yet in *Webster's Dictionary* but certainly in the vocabulary of many preschool children. These are but a few of the challenges that characterize the intersection of my call and context and the context in which I will serve.

God is concerned about family, particularly since there is not now nor has ever been a perfect human family. Even the model provided by Jesus' parents, Mr. & Mrs. Joseph and Mary, was flawed. After all, neither Mr. Joseph nor Mrs. Mary knew where their teenage son was for three days (ref. Luke 2: 43-46). God is concerned with: single mothers and fathers; addicted and estranged mothers and fathers; grandparents raising grandchildren; and foster-parents trying to provide a sense of belonging. God is concerned with divorced parents trying to share custody without sharing love. God cares for the institutional volunteers and workers who are functioning or quasi-families and proxy-parents. It is the will of God that the assistance offered to women, children, and family be holistic. It is the will of God that Christian servants address the family in terms of preservation and restoration.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die."¹⁴ In response, I say, "Amen," because the call is irrevocable and irresistible. The call is a desire, my desire, even my insatiable desire to serve God by meeting the needs of others as an expression of the love of Jesus Christ.

¹⁴ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Touchstone Book Center, 1995), 11.

The cost of discipleship has neither changed nor cheapened. Disciples must teach, lead, follow, and share; therefore, disciples of the twenty-first century must be learned beings, beings able to read and reason. A holistic approach demands that the entire person be ministered to, and this includes her ability to read the Bible.

In 1992, a State Adult Literacy Survey was performed to assess the literacy rate in twelve states. The project was funded by the U. S. Department of Education and administered by Educational Testing Service, and it rendered the following alarming fact concerning the State of Florida “Twenty-one to 23 percent of the adults in Florida demonstrated skills in the lowest level of prose, document, and quantitative proficiencies (Level 1).”¹⁵ This speaks to the inability of many parents to help their children with homework. Additionally, of equal concern is the fact that as more students drop out of school and become parents, the problem of illiteracy grows. Illiterate parents cannot help their children learn because they, too, lack the necessary basic skills needed to function in Florida's ever-increasingly demanding academic climate. The seriousness of the situation is understood when the number of high school dropouts due to pregnancy is examined. Teen pregnancy has caused a significant increase in the need for alternative literacy classes because those young persons who dropped out of school are now parents lacking the basic skills needed to provide adequately for their children. And, the literacy of young parents is crucial to the future of their children and the African American community.

The National Campaign for Teen Pregnancy noted, “Future prospects for teenagers decline significantly if they have a baby. Teen mothers are less likely to complete school and more likely to be single parents.

¹⁵ U. S Department of Education, *Executive Summary from Adult Literacy in Florida*, by Lynn B. Jenkins and Irwin S. Kirsch, 1994. Available at <http://nces.ed.gov/naal/resources/resources.asp#state>

Less than one-third of teens who begin their families before the age of 18 ever earn a high school diploma.”¹⁶ Particularly important is the fact that South Miami-Dade has the highest rate of teen pregnancy in the county. High school dropouts, regardless of whether they are young adolescent girls or older women, are more likely to be unable to help their children with homework and academic activities and therefore are more likely to have children who are low academic performers unless of course, intervention occurs. Additionally, younger, illiterate parents are unlikely to be able to manage the pressures of being responsible adults and parents. And, the problem worsens as the number of children increases.

Family stability is also affected by the economic and literacy status of the parent(s). Education and economics are inherently linked; one facilitates the other. The ability of the head of household to purchase educational experiences, goods, and services that influence their children's decisions to remain in school is affected by, if not proportional to, the head of the household's level of education, which reflects their earning power. Low literacy has influence on every aspect of life. The ability to read and comprehend material can have a direct and detrimental impact upon an individual's safety when dispensing medication or evaluating potential risk or injury put into words..

Literacy also influences the opportunities both children and adults can take advantage of because literacy directly impacts vocation. Mother with less money are unable to purchase services or provide opportunities for learning that require travel or funds for admission.

¹⁶ National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, *Whatever Happened to Childhood? The Problem of Teen Pregnancy in the United States*. (February 2002), Available at <http://www.teenpregnancy.org/>; Internet accessed 27 May 2004.

"In 2000, young adults living in families with incomes in the lowest 20 percent of all family incomes were six times as likely as their peers from families in the top 20 percent of the income distribution to drop out of high school. Ten percent of students from families in the lowest 20 percent of the income distribution dropped out of high school; by way of comparison, 5.2 percent in the middle 60 percent of the income distribution dropped out, as did 1.6 percent of students from families with incomes in the top 20 percent."¹⁷ (U. S. Department of Education 2001)

This clearly demonstrated that earning power and education levels are closely connected. To address the education of single / teen parents is to address the financial status of the household in which her children must live, learn, and grow. The level of income will not change the behaviors that led to the conditions, but it will alleviate some of the distress brought on by the conditions. "The growth in single-parent families remains the single most important reason for increased poverty among children over the last 20 years, as documented in the 1998 Economic Report of the President. Out-of-wedlock childbearing (as opposed to divorce) is currently the driving force behind the growth in the number of single parents, and half of first out-of-wedlock births are to teens"¹⁸ And, since the increase in single parent homes is due to teen pregnancy, something must be done to mandatory address parenting teens because illiterate teen parents without intervention become illiterate adults with children they are unable to assist educationally.

¹⁷ U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, "Dropout Rates in the United States: 2000", National Center for Educational Statistics, Statistical Analysis Report (November 2001), Available from <http://nces.ed.gov/pub2001/>.

¹⁸ National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, *Whatever Happened to Childhood? The Problem of Teen Pregnancy in the United States*. (February 2002), Available at <http://www.teenpregnancy.org>; Internet accessed 27 May 2004.

Last, concerning dropouts and economics in Miami-Dade County, the United States Census Bureau found that “In Perrine 24.5% of the families with related children below the age of five were below the poverty level; and 100% of the families with related children below the age of five with a female Householder (no husband present) were living below the poverty level.”¹⁹ The indication is that couples earn more than single parents and although this may not always be true (i.e. a single female engineer may earn more than a waiter and laborer combined) the old adage that two are better than one can still be applied; especially when referring to low incomes. The implication is: Children of dropout, unwedded teen mothers are according to the economic status of the mother, most likely to be without the benefits available to children of wedded /educated mothers. The conclusion is: Education and economics are inseparable.

Teen age, dropout parents are not emotionally mature; in fact, the children of teen parents are often victims of abuse and neglect. “A recent analysis found that there are 110 reported incidents of abuse and neglect per 1,000 families headed by a young teen mother.”²⁰ Books that would help young mothers avoid becoming a child abuser must be read. Books that explain child development in terms that a young mother would understand require a certain proficiency in reading and comprehension. The role of the African-American female in the family can be reconstructed through education. But it cannot be reconstructed using the conventional academic tool known as the General Educational Development Test.

¹⁹ Miami-Dade County Department of Planning and Zoning, Research Section, 2003. *United States Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3, Miami-Dade County Department of Planning and Zoning, Research Section, 2003.* (May 2003), Available at http://www.miamidade.gov/planzone/librarycensusrsa_perrine.pdf; Internet Accessed May 2004.

²⁰ Ibid.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STATE OF THE ART IN ADULT EDUCATION

In America, education and economics are inherently linked and greatly impact the future of the children of the poor, single, head of household, African-American female parent. This discussion will now address three questions on the state of Adult Education. First, does the traditional educational format meet the education needs of the young, single, poor, and illiterate African-American female parent? Second, what characteristics of the adult education model known as the General Education Diploma adversely impact meeting these needs? And last, what element must a program have if it is to meet the educational needs of the young, single, poor, and illiterate African-American female parent?

About six years ago this author began teaching parenting classes and conducting group therapy sessions at the Homeless Assistance Shelter, the Lutheran Ministries, and the Agape Women's Center. Initially the classes progressed smoothly and the primary concern was group dynamics. It was soon observed that the course curriculum of ten sessions on parenting was changing into ten basic literacy lessons and tutoring sessions. The young parents lacked the basic skills and the mature reasoning ability needed to effectively and correctly mold the lives of their children who were wards of the court living in foster care and group home facilities.

These single mothers could not read the class material. This was a very serious matter because most of the court ordered participants were in danger of permanently losing custody of their children. Often this author struggled with the possibility of one day learning that a child was harmed after being returned to a parent who had passed her parenting class. It was obvious that many of these mothers, especially the very young ones, were not ready for the parental responsibility of molding a young life. Most, if not all of the girls did not fully comprehend their responsibility to their children or themselves. Every week in a group therapy session either someone would announce that she had requested a child custody hearing or someone would announce that she was pregnant again and wanted the group to discuss her options. Most surprising was that the mothers were getting younger and younger and the number of participants in the court ordered classes was getting higher and higher. The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy notes

“In 1999 there were 544 babies born to girls between the ages of 10-14 years old; and 8,770 births to girls between the ages of 15-17 years old. Of the 24,912 girls between the ages of 15-19 years old who gave birth, 36% were African-American females, 28% of them were giving birth to their second child; and 82% of these births were out of wedlock. In 1999, of all the teens between the ages of 15-17 years old that gave birth, 11% of them were having at least their second child and 90% of them were not married. And, in that same year, 96% of teen births to African-American females between the ages of 15-19 years old were out of wedlock.”¹

The demand for parenting and court ordered parenting classes will probably increase as teen pregnancy increases, as these young parents will be expected to responsibly enter the workforce, parenthood and adulthood.

¹ The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy Fact Sheet *Teen Pregnancy and Childbearing in Florida*, February 2002. Available at <http://www.teenpregnancy.org/>; Internet accessed 27 May 2004.

Many times the mothers of these young pregnant girls attempt to help their daughters raise and care for their children, which is a commendable act but not always a successful one. The 28 year old grandmother who dropped out of school may be able to change her grandchild's diaper but unable to positively impact their academic future because she is unable to read or help with homework assignments. These young grandmothers and mothers must be educated on their self worth and the fact that they have been entrusted with a life, a life they must empower and enable to succeed vocationally, financially, academically, socially, and spiritually. True family restoration and preservation extends beyond academia and makes an individual productive in this world while preparing her for the future.

Education includes life skills such as consumer economics, civic responsibility, time and risk management, maintenance of possessions, and child protective care and behavior. Education also includes personal skills and training such as concern for self and others, health and wellness awareness, understanding the difference between healthy and at-risk behaviors, obtaining interpersonal skills that promote smooth conflict resolution, developing good listening skills, social etiquette, and tolerance. An empowered African-American female also embraces civil behavior and ethical decision-making, and she exercises civic responsibility and restraint by obeying the law, respecting human rights, participating in the democratic process, and maintaining respect for public and private property. The education model that incorporates this kind of curriculum will empower the African-American female.

There are two models of Adult Education available to an African-American female who has dropped out of the traditional Miami-Dade County Public School System (MDCPSS) setting. The first is the General Education Diploma curriculum. The second is Adult Basic Education, which is a preparatory course for General Education Diploma curriculum (GED) completion or basic literacy skills for work force readiness. The GED measures academic levels of knowledge and was originally designed to assist young men with skills but lacking a high school diploma. The GED was not geared toward civilian, not to mention women. Consider that,

“GED Tests are developed by the American Council on Education to enable individuals who have not graduated from high school to demonstrate the attainment of developed abilities normally acquired through completion of a high school program of study. In 1942, the GED Tests were developed to allow military personnel returning from World War II to more easily pursue their educational, vocational, and personal goals. More than 800,000 adults take the GED Test each year.”²

Many of the people who have taken and passed the GED have matriculated in college and found successful careers and jobs that enabled them to be removed from the roles of poverty and welfare. And, it is highly unlikely that these individuals did so without support systems that focused on their academic, social, physical, and spiritual well-being.

The GED program in the State of Florida is open to anyone age 16 or older who does not already have a high school diploma. The major entry requirement is an entry assessment test. Students are given the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) to determine their eligibility and readiness for GED courses.

² Florida Department of Education, Office of Workforce Education, Adult Secondary/GED/VPI Committee of the Practitioners' Task Force, Available at <http://www.aceofflorida.org/ged/gedanswer.html>. Internet accessed 27 May 2004.

The TABE has five placement levels: Literacy, Easy, Medium, Difficult, and Advanced and they correspond to grade levels 0-1.9; 1.6-3.9; 3.6-6.9; 6.6-8.9; and 8.6-12.9 respectively.³ Each test is an individual test instrument, and the student must achieve a level of 8.9 or higher on the TABE in order to be admitted into a GED class. These levels provide single mothers with specific starting points for goal setting as they progress through each set of curriculum. “The GED program is an open-entry, open-exit program in which a student may enroll at any time during the term of the school year. Instruction is often self paced with flexible schedules and a performance based evaluation.

Placement into the GED program is based on an individual needs assessment. State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.014, FAC, General Requirements for Adult General Education Programs require an academic skills test for adult general education including the GED...

The Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) is the most widely used assessment instrument for the GED program and was developed specifically for the adult learner.”⁴ Students who do not meet the minimum scoring criteria necessary for admittance into a GED class are recommended to an ABE class.

The ABE program has two purposes: “To provide basic literacy and life skills for adults who are performing at or below the eighth grade level or to improve the employability of basic education students who are performing at or below the grade level equivalency of 0.0-5.9.”⁵

³ State of Florida Adult Basic Education Web Page, Florida Department of Education Resource Guide. Available at <http://abeflorida.org/frameworks-2.html>; Internet accessed 27 May 2004.

⁴ State of Florida Official GED Web Page. Florida Department of Education, Office of Workforce Education by the Adult Secondary/GED/VPI <http://www.aceofflorida.org/ged>; Internet accessed 27 May 2004.

⁵ Ibid.

Those students performing at or above the 8th grade level follow the GED preparation curriculum while those scoring 5.9 or below follow the literacy or workforce readiness curriculum. The approach of both the GED and the ABE curriculums is socially discriminatory because neither makes an effort to improve the individual's overall living condition. Indeed, the community and society at large benefit when an individual who was once a financial burden to the state's taxpayers becomes self sufficient, but the community and society may still be burdened if that individual practices other behaviors that cost society in other areas not associated with welfare costs. It is this author's opinion that public education implies a social connection to the individual receiving the education and its implied benefits. "When shared purposes and the social contracts they imply become the prime source of authority for what happens in school, the school itself becomes a covenantal community. The choice of the word covenant was deliberate; its use implies that the school changes from a secular to a sacred enterprise, from a mere instrument designed to achieve certain ends to a virtuous enterprise. A Covenant Community is a group of people who share certain purposes, values, and beliefs, who feel a strong sense of place, and who think of the welfare of the group as being more important than that of the individual. This community inspires deep loyalty and compels members to work together for the common good."⁶ The GED /ABE curriculums do not include life experiences that promote a covenantal community; instead, they simply monitor and reward or penalize performance.

⁶ Kenneth Pohly, *Transforming the Rough Places: The Ministry of Supervision 2nd Edition*, (Franklin, Tennessee: Providence House Publishers, 2001), 38-39.

The view is that if a person passes the GED/ABE then society benefits; however, academic achievement alone does not ensure decent character, good conduct, or a love for family. Some could argue that the same holds true for students who did not drop out or became teen parents but rather completed public high school. This is acceptable if it is agreed that people who make mistakes must not be left in the garbage can of illiteracy to rot with their innocent children. They must be restored. They must be approached from the perspective of the family and not the facility. When people are restored, the family is preserved.

The GED contains no moral teachings, and none are required. This is an area that the Faith Based Initiative must explore. After all, teaching morals such as honesty does not violate the 1st Amendment. “GED classes teach and measure competency in five areas: Language Arts Reading, Language Writing, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Students obtaining an overall average score of 410 receive a State of Florida High School Diploma, and, if the student has only been out of school a short time, her diploma will include the name of their last attended high school.”⁷ Maturity and morality are not concerns.

Both the GED and the ABE education models assume adulthood or an adult level of comprehension, and that assumption is based on whether or not a person passes an academic skills test. Adult classes inherently assume that students have reached a certain level of independence and responsibility.

⁷ Florida Department of Education, Office of Workforce Education, Adult Secondary/GED/VPI Committee of the Practitioners' Task Force, Available at <http://www.aceofflorida.org/ged/gedanswer.html>. Internet accessed 27 May 2004.

However, a fifteen year-old African-American female, pregnant or otherwise, is still a 15 year-old female African-American child. This too, is a reason the GED and the ABE do not meet the needs of the single African-American female parent or at risk child. Neither the GED nor the ABE empowers beyond academics.

In closing, it should be understood that this is not meant to challenge the Miami-Dade County Public School System and the teachers who labor tirelessly to teach and touch the minds and hearts of the children who are in their charge a few hours each day. It is meant to relay the severity and complexity of the problem being faced. Each time a child drops out of school, the family structure fails, the community fails, the school fails, and the *ecclesia* fails.

If the GED / ABE programs are to enable and empower the single African-American female teen parent to be successful or improved then both curriculums must be changed. The new curriculums must include child development, nutrition and safety, abuse prevention, tutoring and homework assistance skills for young parents, parent / child interactive learning techniques, predator prevention, social etiquette, gun protection and control, home management and financial skills, practical and ethical decision making, civic responsibility, and the importance of maintaining a relationship with the child's school. The educational curriculum intending to address the single African-American teen parent must be designed to assist these young mothers not only at their academic levels but at their social development levels, too. The curriculum must also include methods of relating to the stress of parenting and how stress, when uncontrolled, can manifest itself in the form of child abuse. Adulthood requires self-control and Child Discipline be practiced; and spanking should be allowed, though not be relied upon.

Parents make right and proper decisions because they are mature, not because they are parents. The GED/ ABE curriculum must be changed to include practical teachings and exercises for proper decision making techniques. Even practical aspects such as how to plan a meal, separate laundry, and read a child's report card must be addressed if there is to be reasonable assurance that the child will receive proper care. The teen parent should receive the education needed to become more than one who is merely literate or functional but rather a successful adult and parent.

The questions concerning the GED model and the educational needs of the young, single, poor, and illiterate African-American female parent have been addressed. The final question concerns the basics a curriculum must offer if it is to meet these needs. The basis of such a curriculum must reach beyond the boundaries of pass or fail criteria and into the realm of mercy and forgiveness. This curriculum's academic standards must be grounded in and sustained by biblically sound teachings on abstinence, domestic violence, adult education, child development, parenting, forgiveness, dating, a single parent's role, drug / alcohol abuse, marriage, divorce, finance management, prayer, life skills, stress management, self assertion training, civic responsibility, Christian Bible Study, fellowship and forgiveness. This curriculum is offered in conjunction with the State of Florida's GED / ABE curriculum. This concept is known as the Chavvah Project, a program designed to reconstruct the role of the African-American female in the family to empower her children. The GED/ABE curriculums are socialization processes to which people must adapt themselves and in which they must present themselves and serve themselves. The Chavvah Project is a spiritualization process in which people deny themselves, yield themselves, sanctify themselves, and serve others.

This is not just a morality issue because babies must be properly cared for. This is not just a quality of life issue because mothers need more than a high school diploma to earn decent wages or assist their children with homework. This is not just an economic issue because families cannot survive on minimum wages. This is not just a government funding issue because government cannot care for souls. This is an issue of survival, a matter of family, a matter of economics, a matter of femininity, a matter of morality, a matter of education, a matter of ministry, even a matter of eternity. Why? Because the ministry of the church is to evangelize, equip, edify, encourage, and educate. Family preservation and restoration is the will of God. These are goals that can be achieved if the role of the African-American female is reconstructed to empower their children's development.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Effective and informative dialogue that focuses on reconstructing the role of the female in the African American family must begin with an exchange on the historical and social conditions and circumstances that proliferated the present structure. From God-created Eve, mother of all living, to Potiphar's wife, from Potiphar's wife to Moses's wife, from Sarah's handmaiden to Abraham's concubine, from Abraham's concubine to the Queen of Sheba, from Queen of Sheba to slave and concubine in the Master's house, and from slave and concubine in the Master's house to Condoleezza Rice, intelligent, distinguished, and the first African American female to serve as Cabinet Member in the White House, the role of the African-American female has been dynamic, diverse, and disposed to change. This discussion will focus on the role of the female in the family based on the names used to describe the female in the creation narrative of Genesis.

A three part discussion using Genesis 1:26-28, 2:21-24 and 3:20 will focus attention on the epithets for women. This discussion will proceed with a prologue on the importance of names in the Hebrew culture and the name of God in these passages.

For centuries the patriarchal hermeneutic for the creation narrative presented the idea that "Had it not been for Eve," the creation narrative would have ended with the words "And they live happily ever after."

The purpose of this discussion is to present a new paradigm that aims to challenge this kind of androcentrism because it has impeded and continues to impede the progressive participation of women in ancient, modern, and post-modern societies. Concerning the historical view of women, in the book *Women, Authority & the Bible*, Patricia Gundry notes the words of early Church Father Tertullian: “God’s sentence hangs still over all of your sex and His punishment weighs down upon you. You are the devil’s gateway; you are she who first violated the forbidden tree and broke the law of God. It was you who coaxed your way around him whom the devil had not the force to attack. With what ease you shattered that image of God; Man! Because of the death you merited the Son of God had to die.”¹

It is amazing that the first person to use the word *trinitas* (trinity) would also believe that only the human male was made in the image of God. Imagine women being told that men were more like God than they were. Imagine the hopelessness and anxiety of the women hearing this indictment. In the same text, Gundry also noted that two hundred years after the death of Tertullian, the Bishop of Hippo, Augustine stated, “The woman herself alone is not the image of God: whereas the man alone is the image of God as fully and completely as when the woman is joined with him.”² Eve, according to this way of thinking, was only connected to the image of God through her relationship with Adam, and neither the marriage nor consummation of it changed Adam or her inferior self. Being male is equated with being God and being female is equated with being inferior, substandard.

¹ Alvera Mickelson, ed., *Women, Authority, & The Bible* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 21.

² *Ibid.*, 21.

Today, as more sound principles and tools of exegesis are utilized, this antiquated androcentric view is abandoned, and women are released from its condemnation. God has blessed women with a unique expression in the created order, an expression that allows for analogy with God. It is an expression that not even sexism can keep under a bush. Sexism is defined as a “Belief that persons are superior or inferior to one another on the basis of their sex. It includes, however attitudes, value systems, and social patterns which express or support this belief. Historically, sexism has maintained that persons of the male sex are inherently superior to persons of the female sex by nature that is, the very order of things, and it has acted in discriminatory ways to enforce this order.”³

Patriarchy is the system where men are the dominant and controlling force in all matters. Androcentrism, “From the Greek *aner/andros* (male human being), is the name commonly given to the personal pattern of thinking and acting that takes the characteristics of ruling men to be the normative for all humanity.”⁴ Many of the androcentric attitudes women have faced for centuries have been based on the Holy Bible and the system of patriarchy that dominated ancient biblical society. St. Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274), author of the *Summa Theologica*, said, “As regards the individual nature, woman is defective and misbegotten, for the active force in the male seed tends to the production of a perfect likeness in the masculine sex; while the

³ Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1997), 23.

⁴ *Ibid*, 23.

production of women comes from a defect in the active force or from some material indisposition, or even from some external influence, such as that of a south wind.”⁵ This certainly stands in unequivocal contrast to St. Thomas’ acceptance of Aristotle’s principle that every effect has a cause, every cause has a prior cause, and all causes can be traced back to a first cause. Unless, of course, the first cause used defective material or the first cause is defective.

This type of outdated patriarchal and even misogynistic interpretation of the creation narrative events is the principal reason for the abuse, misery, rejection, and inhumane standards women have endured and continue to endure not just behind the closed doors of the home but also before the open doors of the church. “The systematic subjection, denigration, and oppression of women in the name of the Gospel needs no documentation. While there are certainly exceptions of persons and places, the Christian tradition, as a whole, both theoretically and practically, has asserted the fundamental equality of men and women before God and their fundamental inequality before each other.”⁶ Male superiority and female inferiority as the design of God has long been taught under the guise of relevant hermeneutic. Why? Historically women have been blamed for the social ills, horrible conditions, sinful acts, and all the physical and economic plagues that all human beings have to endure. Proponents of this teaching have not just been Judeo-Christian historical literature writers, but writers of other ancient literature too.

⁵ Alvera Mickelson, ed., *Women, Authority, & The Bible* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 21.

⁶ Carolyn Osiek, *Beyond Anger: On Being A Feminist In Church* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1986), 46.

Hesiod, a poet and farmer who lived in Boeotia, in approximately 700 B.C. held an unsympathetic view of women. This view is clearly expressed in his story of the creation of the first woman, Pandora. “Her name is ambiguous. It can mean *giver of all gifts*, making her a benevolent fertility figure, or recipient of all gifts. Hesiod chooses the latter interpretation in order to attribute to the first woman the woes of mankind...Pandora is comparable to the temptress Eve, and the box she opened may be a metaphor for carnal knowledge of women, which was a source of evil to men.”⁷ Pomeroy argues that it was Hesiod’s explanation of the generations of the gods and the progression from matriarchy to patriarchy that characterizes his view of women and also that his view most likely represented the prevailing view of his day. Even though the epic of Pandora’s Box is clearly mythology, it is also a glimpse of male-female relationships in Greek civilization. “Myths are not lies, but rather men’s attempt to impose a symbolic order upon their universe.”⁸ Perhaps a more accurate statement would be that myths are men’s attempt to impose a self-promoting order on the universe. What does this myth have to do with Judeo-Christian societies, ancient or modern? And, how does it advance dialogue on the role of women in the family? According to Hesiod’s view, “The woes of mankind can be attributed to the first woman.”⁹ And, historically, the same line of reasoning has been the basis for interpreting the Genesis creation narrative.

⁷ Sarah B. Pomeroy, *Goddess, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity* (New York: Schocken Books), 2-4.

⁸ Ibid., 1.

⁹ Ibid., 2.

Before this discussion focuses on the creation narratives of Genesis to examine the restructuring of the role of the female in the African American family based on the epithets used to refer to the first female, a brief discussion of names in the Hebrew tradition will be presented.

Hebrew Names and God's Name in the Creation Narrative

The age-old question of what's in a name is answered in the Bible as in no other literature. In biblical literature the name tells history, herstory, and the most important story of all the redemption of humanity. The act of naming and being named had great significance in the ancient Hebrew culture. "The first and a newborn Hebrew underwent was the naming custom. It was only in later times that this event was withheld until the eighth day after birth when the child was circumcised. A person is concentrated in a name (Nabal was like his name; he was a "fool"). Ideally, the name was either descriptive of the parents' wishes or prophetic of the personality to be manifested by one so named."¹⁰ Therefore, the name of an ancient biblical character can relate information about his personality, daily existence, family expectations, and even the will of God at work in an individual's life. It is in light of this fact that it is easy to understand why the naming of the first woman has such great significance for restructuring the role of the female in the African American family.

¹⁰ W. C. Kaiser Jr., "Names" in *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*.

It would be most inappropriate to begin a discussion on any name in the creation narrative without first addressing the name of God in that narrative. After all, it is only God who has the ability, power, and authority to speak names, characters, and worlds into existence. While this discussion is not to investigate the divine names used to refer to God in the Pentateuch, it is noteworthy that evidence indicates that even the earliest of biblical writers understood the names of God to reveal God's character, nature, function, and work.

The name used to refer to God in the texts of this discussion is 'Elôhîym (Elohim). Strong Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible renders “ elohiyim, el-o-heem'; plural of 433; gods in the ordinary sense; but specifically used (in the plur. Thus, esp. with the art.) of the supreme *God*.¹¹ Superficially, the name 'Elôhîym may seem to indicate that the Hebrew people believed in many gods, but contrary to this, the Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament states, “The plural ending is usually described as a plural of majesty and not intended as a true plural when used of God. This is seen in the fact that the noun 'elôhîm is consistently used with singular verb forms and with adjectives and pronouns in the singular. Albright has suggested that the use of this majestic plural comes from the tendency in the ancient near east toward a universalism. We find in Canaanite an increasing tendency to employ the plural Ashtorôth'astartes', and anatôt 'Anaths', in the clear sense of totality of manifestation of a deity'(William F. Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity*, 2d ed.; p213).

¹¹ James Strong, *The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary accompanying The Exhaustive Concordance* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990), 12.

But we find a better reason can be seen in Scripture itself where, in the very first chapter of Gen., the necessity of a term conveying both the unity of the one God and yet allowing for a plurality of persons is found (Gen. 1:2, 26). This is further borne out by the fact that the form 'ělōhîm occurs only in Hebrew and in no other Semitic language, not even in Biblical Aramic (Gustav F. Oehler, *Theology of the Old Testament*, p.88).¹²

This use of plurality is also viewed as a revelation of the Triune nature of the God of Israel as later revealed in the New Testament. "God. Lit., Elohim, 1 a generic term for deity as well as a proper name for the true God... The form of the word is plural, indicating plentitude of power and majesty and allowing for the N.T. revelation of the triunity of the Godhead.¹³ Genesis 1:26 states, "Let us make man in our image and likeness," and the plural terms of *us* and *our* refers to Elohim and exemplifies the relational nature of the Trinitarian Godhead. The fact that Elohim is plural and the verb *make* is singular further discloses God's divine nature and creative power. "When indicating the true God, 'ělōhîm functions as the subject of all divine activity revealed to man and as the object of all true reverence and fear from men."¹⁴ As the Hebrew people experienced God, many descriptors were attached to 'ělōhîm as titles to God.

¹² R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Vol. 1*, by Jack B. Scott. (Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1980), 44.

¹³ Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, *The Ryrie Study Bible New International Version* (Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1986), 7.

¹⁴ R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Vol. 1*, 'ělōhîm by Jack B. Scott. (Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1980), 44.

These names ascribed to God by people avowed various attributes and characteristics to the nature of God as understood though human experiences and limitations. So 'ělōhîm (God) is not only the generic name used to encompass the attributes and nature of God through the human experience but also embodies and stresses God's work and sovereign power as creator.

The name, translated, Jehovah, was also in the creation narrative of Genesis 2. Though many scholars purport that the narrative of Genesis 2 is older than the narrative of Genesis 1, it suffices for this purpose to note, "There are two accounts of the creation of humanity in the Book of Genesis. The later account composed by the Priestly writer is completely egalitarian in its description of human creation. God is described as creating humanity immediately in its dual sexual form; there is no priority or inferiority expressed or implied."¹⁵ Since, in the ancient Hebrew culture a person's name expresses his very nature and essence, great importance and significance must be attached to the various names given to the first woman. And, on this basis, this author now presents a study on the relationship between names and the role of women in ancient Hebrew culture. The first premise is simply that the terms used to refer to the first female earth creature depict the role of that female and bear implications for all females. Secondly, this author contends that the naming of the first woman in the creation narrative by both God and man is important to understanding and interpreting how she must relate to all others in the created realm.

¹⁵ Leonard Swidler, *Biblical Affirmations of Woman* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Westminster Press, 1979), 75.

Indeed, there have been questions regarding the status of women versus the status of men. And, finally, this discussion affirms that the first female is the original yet symbolic and the ideal and classical epitome of all human females in all areas of human female existence, past, present, or future.

Historical Foundation, The First Epithet

And God said; let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.
 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. Genesis 1: 26-28 KJV¹⁶

Having addressed the importance of names in the Hebrew culture and the name God, 'ělōhîm, in the creation narrative, this discussion will now turn to the significance of the naming of the first woman by both God and man. Eve is presented as symbolic of all women, ancient and contemporary, and she is named three times in the creation narratives of Genesis. Each occasion is significant because it speaks to the diversity of the roles and relationships that will define her life. These roles and relationships are made obvious in the sequence of the naming. First, she is named according to her relationship with God. Secondly, according to her relationship with mankind, and lastly according to practical outworking of the first two names in life.

¹⁶ Genesis 1:26-28, Holy Bible KJV

Correspondingly, this discussion will develop its Historical, Biblical, and Theological foundation based on the three naming episodes. The Historical foundation will be based on Genesis 1:26-28, the Biblical on Genesis 2:21-24, and the Theological on Genesis 3:20. The original female stands as the icon for all women, not just idealistically or symbolically, but realistically too. It is from her that all women receive their impression, expression, and appearance. And, when the creation narrative is read, it must be read with an eye vigilantly looking for every female. The biblical account of the first woman is not a legend about some imagined being who has taken on some kind of mythological or transcendental significance. It is about the life of the first woman, an ancient social being who was responsive to her instincts, relationships, environment, and creator.

To glimpse her life is to glimpse the life of every woman; she is the paradigm and must be viewed from a unique perspective. “We must approach the Eve narrative in another way, as well, its link with the experience of Israel in the ancient Near Eastern World. Not only does Eve represent Israelite women, she is also a product of the way of life of women in that world. The social realities of everyday provided the raw material from which the biblical narrator forged the now famous tale...Similarly, the depiction of Eve must be treated as a reflection of and sanction for the lot of the Israelite woman. To become aware of women’s way of life during the time of the Hebrew Bible was to come to grips with the reality that determined Eve. In this sense, “Eve” is Everywoman-every woman who lived in ancient Israel.”¹⁷ To know Eve is to know the base of every ancient and contemporary woman; she is woman.

¹⁷ Carol Meyers, *Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women In Context* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 4.

The first name given the female is translated *man* in the *King James Version* of the *Holy Bible* and *humankind* in the *Revised Standard Version* (RSV). Though the King James translation of *man* is not of necessity an erroneous one, it has not always been understood or interpreted in its purest or perhaps even intended sense. *Man*. The word is used generically here, then amplified by the phrase *male and female*, even though Eve's physical formation is not detailed until 2:18-23. Not only is humanity (from this point on treated as a proper noun), without differentiated sexual connotation; Humanity is equal. The treatment of Humanity as a proper noun is to witness to the unique relationship Humanity has with God compared to the rest of creation and (as it will be later demonstrated) to correlate proper names (synonyms) used in the creation narrative to refer to the role God ordained for the female in the family.

The recognition of synonymous names is pertinent to discovering the role of the female in the first family because in primeval times role and name were intrinsic to each other. And noteworthy to this is that this author does not support the view or notion that the first created being was in some way a hermaphroditic being as understood by Ruether's "It simply makes the essential point that the genus, 'ādām, is bisexual in its created nature."¹⁸ Nor is it meant to imply or bear witness to the modern notion of evolution, which some attempt to support with a supposed chronology of creation.

¹⁸ Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Religion and Sexism: Images of Woman in the Jewish and Christian Traditions* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974), 73.

Humanity is and was never either feminine or masculine but a living being, mostly spoken of and written about in masculine terms. Humanity's identity is the image and likeness of God without chronology. "From the perspective of the Priestly writer of Genesis 1, and modern evolutionary thought, the claim that the woman was created after man would indicate that she is superior to him. But of course the Priestly writer did not claim woman was created after man but rather 'God created humanity ... male and female he created them; the Priestly writer is affirming male and female equality."¹⁹ The lessening of one is the lessening of the other and God's image and likeness in them both because it is God's image and likeness that gives them worth.

The task Humanity is assigned by God determined the role of Humanity. The task God gave Humanity, a genderless being, was/is clear, exercise dominion. Apropos of this describing and understanding Humanity's exercising of dominion over creation is the use of the interpreted synonyms for Humanity in the creation narrative. One such is the name/descriptor *Adam*, which is the same Hebrew term used to specify man (Humanity). The word Adam in Genesis 2:19-20 and Genesis 2:15-16 is the same word used in Genesis 1:26-27 and translated as "Man Strong #120."²⁰ Therefore, the Bible itself provides the evidence needed to deduce that Humanity's role is the same as Adam's role, even though historically Adam has been interpreted as androcentric and patriarchal (sexual identity). The synonymous names are presented in Appendix B. Throughout this discussion this chart may be referred to.

¹⁹Leonard Swidler, *Biblical Affirmations of Woman* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Westminster Press, 1979), 76.

²⁰ James C. Strong, *New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990), 8.

The first role that God ordained for Humanity is that of *exercising dominion* as stated in Genesis 1:26. Dominion , defined by Strong # 7287 as “Rawdaw; a prim. root; to tread down, i.e. subjugate; spec. To crumble off - (come to, make to) have dominion, prevail against, reign, (bear, make to) rule (r. over), take.”²¹ Deep within the synonymous names of the first human is the key to identifying, defining, and describing one of the primary roles of the female in the family. Today there are many tasks involved in exercising dominion, and all of them can be categorized or related to the two specified in Genesis 2:15, “And the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it (KJV).”²² The word *dress* is translated by Strong as “’âbad, aw-bad’; a prim. Root; to work (in any sense); by impl. to serve, till...”²³ The concept of exercising dominion by working may not harmonize with Western interpretations of exercising dominion; nevertheless, work is still the exercising of dominion rather than the punishment for sin. The role of Humanity is revealed in the mandate of Genesis 2:15, which is before sin enters creation and before the image and likeness of God, Humanity, is given sexuality. This does not mean that sin and sexuality are in some way connected to each other but that at this point in the created order neither existed. The TWOT notes,

“Man’s work and labor is not the result of sin and the fall. Already in God’s great creation, man was placed in the garden to work it (’âbad, Gen. 2:15). The curse is (Gen.3:16-17) only the pain and hardship that is to accompany labor, not the labor itself (cf. ’eseb “sorrow”).

²¹ Ibid., 107.

²² Genesis 2:15 (KJV)

²³ James C. Strong, *New Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990), 84.

This point is made when Lamech says at the birth of Noah that he ‘shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord cursed’ (Gen.5:29).²⁴

Moreover, the word *till* in Gen. 2:5 (KJV) is the same as the word *The New International Version* (NIV), translates in Gen. 2:15 as *dress*. Both words are rendered as *work* in the NIV and *till* in the *Revised Standard Version (RSV)* The crux of the matter is that, prior to sin and not coincidental to sin, Humanity was mandated to exercise dominion by work.

Finally, the exercising of dominion also includes the idea of stewardship. Genesis 2:15 also states that Humanity is to keep the Garden; this, too, is the exercising of dominion. Strong renders *keep* as “shamar, shaw-mar; a prim root prop. To hedge about (as with a thorns) i.e. guard; gen. To protect, attend to, etc.: beware, be circumspect, take heed (to self), keep (-er, self), mark, look narrowly, observe, preserve, regard, reserve, save (self), sure (that lay) wait (for), watch (-man).”²⁵ When considered in context, the mandate to keep means to attend. “A third ramification is to ‘take care of’, ‘guard.’ This involves keeping or tending to things such as a garden (Gen. 2:15), a flock (Gen. 30:31), a house (II Sam.15: 16).²⁶ The implications of this mandate become fundamental when viewed from an ecological, social, and anthropological perspective.

²⁴ R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, and Bruce K. Waltke eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, Vol. 2, (Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1980), 640.

²⁵ James C. Strong, *New Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990), 118.

²⁶ R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, and Bruce K. Waltke eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, Vol. 2, (Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1980), 939.

The social and ecological implications of this mandate have only recently became discernible. Humanity was given the responsibility of attending to the Garden of Eden, not just the soil and trees but also the Pi'-shon, Gi'-hon, Hid'-de-kel (Tigris), and Euphrates Rivers, all of which flowed from Eden. The ecology and society's quality of life are inseparable. Anthropologically speaking the mandate of the creator had not been venerated. Environmental pollution indicts Humanity for not having effectively functioned as the keeper of the garden, which is the environment.

Careful analysis of the first naming in the creation narrative renders the name Humanity, which has been historically interpreted as referring to masculinity, now reveals that it is accurately understood as referring to a being, any being made in the image and likeness of God. The foundation for restructuring the role of the African-American female to Empower Child Development lies within the first name used to refer to her. For she and her children are the image and likeness of God and are therefore Humanity, aka Adam. That name has historically been understood to exclude her, but this is no longer the case. Long before sexism and androcentric societies, God decreed two things 1) To create Humanity in God's image and likeness; and 2) that Humanity work in and watch over all creation. The first woman and all women are in the image and likeness of God and are therefore mandated by God to exercise dominion over creation. To deny this role to women is to deny this role to men.

Biblical Foundation, The Second Epithet

Names and naming continue to be the focus of restructuring the role of the female in the African-American family. The first name, Humanity, was based on Humanity being created in the image and likeness of God and was treated as a proper noun for the easy correlation of tantamount names/nouns (see Appendix B, Names and Identities in Genesis). Genesis 2:28 is the occasion of the second naming of the female, which is based on a relationship with the male species. This naming results from there being no comparable helper for Humanity among all the other created beings. And, for clarity purposes, Humanity continues to be a proper noun used in place of *man* on occasions where *man* refers to all humankind. “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth” is the first mandate given to Humanity God in Genesis (cf. Gen. 1:28). Before the mandate to exercise dominion, there is the mandate to multiply the species.

This indicates two important facts: first, God always intended that there be the multiplication of the species, Humanity, and second, multiplication was not meant to be the task of a single being but the task of beings made in the image and likeness of God. Humanity, a single and solitary being, unable to beget (be fruitful and multiply), is addressed by God with the words, “It is not good for Humanity to be alone; I will make a help meet for Humanity (cf. Gen. 2: 18).”²⁷

²⁷ Genesis 2:18, Holy Bible KJV

The term Help is rendered “êzer, ay’zer; from 5826; aid: -help” and Strong 5826 is ‘âzar, aw-zar; a prim. Root; to surround, i.e. protect or aid; -help, succour.”²⁸ The word *meet* is derived from the same root word as help and Strong numbers are exactly the same. Complementary to this is the rendering of help/meet in the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament (TWOT)*, which makes a noteworthy distinction that has significant implications for identifying the role of the female in the family. “Used approximately eighty times in the OT, ‘âzar generally indicates military assistance... Personal assistance, non-military in character, is found particularly in Psalms. The Lord is seen as the Helper of the underprivileged; ...while this word designates assistance, it is more frequently used in a concrete sense to designate the assistant. (cf. Gen. 2:18, 20 where Eve is created to be Adam’s help[er]. As to the source of the help, this word is generally used to designate divine aid, particularly in Psalms (cf. 121:1, 2 where it includes both material and spiritual assistance.”²⁹ Wherein *Strong’s Concordance* conveys the idea of an individual who provides assistance, concerning the stated purpose of this discussion, it does not capture the context of Genesis 2:18, which is about a specific set of circumstances that are beyond the individual’s power to influence. It is in the context of Humanity being completely helpless and unable to comply with God’s mandate to “be fruitful and multiply” that God says “I will make a helpmeet for Humanity.” Humanity was not performing a task, and God realized that the task would be easier to complete if there were a second laborer (female) to assist.

²⁸ James C. Strong, *New Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990), 87.

²⁹ R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, and Bruce K. Waltke eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Vol. 2*, (Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1980), 660.

The point is that the task could not even get started until another one, a comparable one, was introduced. The *TWOT* indicates that the words *help and meet* are both used to indicate the need for divine intervention, which places Humanity in need, with only God to rely upon. In contemporary society, the word *assistant* conveys the idea of someone who enables another person who is experiencing difficulty in completing a goal, task, or duty. The indication is that the one who assists may or may not have a personal relevance or importance to the overall purpose or outcome of the task. “The traditional English translation, *help meet for him* (KJV), has given rise to *helpmate*. Close analysis of this phrase is essential, and the results are revealing. It consists of a noun based on the verb *to help* and meaning *one who helps*. The function of the latter becomes clear only by noting the ambiguity present in the former. That is, how does ‘one who helps’ or ‘helper’ stand in relationship to the one receiving help (italics mine)?”³⁰ The indication would be that the one fulfilling the need is greater or in some way better equipped than the one needing the help. This indicates also that the helper is preeminent to the completion of the task. The point is that the helper is just as important as the one requiring the help and the one requiring the help, is just as important as the one providing it. So, with that said, it is important not to attribute contemporary understandings to ancient times. Not only was Humanity not a male being experiencing some difficulty getting a task done and in need of a day laborer, but Humanity was unable and ill equipped to comply with the mandate “be fruitful and multiply.” God could have created Humanity a sexual being, a male and female, from the very beginning.

³⁰ Carol Meyers, *Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women In Context* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 85.

The TWOT's specific emphasis on divine intervention and Humanity's inability thwarts any notion that a *help / meet* is just a subordinate or non-essential being that lends a hand when a superior being experiences difficulty. The superior being would never be in need of help but always the provider of it, and such can only be said of God. "The noun helper" can thus indicate either a superior or subordinate. How can one resolve this ambiguity? In any given case, the phrase in Genesis 2:18 and 20 provides the answer by telling us what kind of helper is meant. In fact, the answer is neither of the possibilities suggested above: The helper stands neither higher nor lower than the one being helped. The phrase establishes a nonhierarchical relationship between the two; it means "opposite", or "corresponding to" or "parallel with," or "on a par with."³¹ Consequently, it is Humanity's inability that God makes apparent with the words, "It is not good for Humanity to be alone; I will make; and be fruitful and multiply," all of which emphasize God's sovereign creative power.

In building a helpmeet God uses Humanity for the raw material from which a second being is built. The role of Humanity is wholly changed. God begins the creative miracle by putting Humanity to sleep. From this point on Humanity's role is forever changed, categorically and fundamentally. The mystery of God' creative power is evidenced by the deep sleep that God causes to fall upon Humanity. Only God is awake and aware of what transpires. There is no need for Humanity to help. In fact, sleep indicates that Humanity is not aware of itself in any respect.

³¹ Ibid.

It is God who says, “It is not good for Humanity to be alone” and that Humanity is helpless and ignorant of its needs for relationship, just as at other crucial points in the narrative when a relationship is initiated (e.g., the covenant with Abraham, 15:12; the covenant with Jacob, 28:11). The recipient of God’s provision sleeps while God acts. Within these narratives the purpose of the sleep is not merely anesthetic, although in the present narrative that surely plays a part. As in the other narratives listed above, the man’s sleep in the face of divine activity appears to be intended to portray a sense of passivity and acceptance of the divine provision (cf. Ps. 127:2).³²

Once Humanity is asleep, God builds the rib into a being. Genesis 2:22 carefully notes that God removes a rib from Humanity (Strong #120), builds it in to a female (Strong #802), and bring the female to Humanity (Strong #120, see Appen.B). The first female was not taken from the first man, a sexual being. The first female was built into a sexual being from the raw material taken from Humanity, a generic, non-sexual being, interpreted as a proper noun Adam. Humanity, once devoid of that material is also forever changed. The change was not an operation that separated or changed one hermaphroditic being into two separate and distinct beings, but the change was the result of God ensuring companionship and guaranteeing compatibility in all aspects of human existence. Humanity without that which is female is a male. Humanity without that which is male is female. Humanity is male and female in the image and likeness of God. Finally, and noteworthy is that female and woman are not used interchangeably (same Hebrew word) but that wife and woman are. The next verse, Genesis 2:23, relates two significant proclamations that resulted from the surgery that God performed while Humanity slept.

³² Frank E. Gaebelein, ed., *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, vol. 2, Genesis* by John Sailhamer. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1990), 46.

First, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh:” and secondly “she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man.”³³ Humanity, the non-sexual being, recognizes itself within the self of another being and understands that a change occurred within it’s self and that oneself became two-selves.

This is to be wo-man (ishshah), for this was taken from man (ish). Up to that point it is very clear that the creature out of which woman is fashioned is *ha adam*, generic, undifferentiated humanity. But as soon as the Yahwist focuses on the play on words and presents his folk etymology of the Hebrew word for woman, *ishshah*, as taken from *ish*. (Because they sound similar) the possibility of confusion arises; the unwarranted conclusion that woman was taken for the male, i.e. that the female was formed from the rib of the male rather than from undifferentiated humanity is at hand. But the writer’s intent would seem to be that the word wo-man (ishshah) is taken from the word man (ish; the word *ishshah* appears –though modern grammarians tells us it is not really so- basically to be the word *ish* with the feminine suffix *ah* added to it.³⁴

God’s removal of the rib changed Humanity into a sexual being, a being capable of recognizing itself and its comparable self. Just as the descriptor Humanity, reflects the mandate to exercise dominion, the descriptor *ishshah* / *issa* reflects the mandate to be fruitful and multiply, which requires the new, sexual beings. “The word woman (iššâ) demonstrates that the issue is not the naming of the female but rather the recognition of sexuality. ’Iššâ itself is not a name; it is a common noun, not a proper noun. It designates gender; it does not specify person.”³⁵

³³ Genesis 2:23, Holy Bible KJV

³⁴ Leonard Swidler, *Biblical Affirmations of Woman* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Westminster Press, 1979), 76.

³⁵ Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Fortress Press, 1978), 100.

Even more important to this discussion is the fact that the word translated *woman* in Genesis 2:22-23 is the same word translated *wife* in Genesis 2: 24-25; both come into being only because God declared the need for Helpmeet (see Appen.B).

Equally important to restructuring the role of the female in the family is the fact that the one whom Ish names Ishshah, God names Helpmeet. The context of the descriptor ishshah / issa as a comparable helper is also clear. The helpmeet was not created because of the need for additional persons to exercise dominion but because of Humanity's inability to complete God's directive, "Be fruitful and multiply." Helpmeet's ability to be fruitful and multiply necessitated three fulfilled phases of awareness: Self Awareness, Social Awareness, and Sexual Awareness. These phases are the Three Part Marriage Formula of Genesis 2:23-25. This formula provides the foundation for restructuring the role of the female in the family.

The first phase or the Marriage Formula, Self-Awareness, was evidenced by the words of Genesis 2:23, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."³⁶ These words reveal that Helpmeet is comparable to Ish in terms of all that they share. "In both accounts (Priestly and Yahwist), man and woman are indissolubly bound together, but the closeness of the connection is differently expressed. The Priestly Code expresses it in a manner that man and woman together make *ādhām* (man). The passage reads: God created man (*hā-ādhām*) in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them (1:27). Singular and plural are used indifferently about the same being.

³⁶ Genesis 2:23, Holy Bible KJV

Man is a whole consisting of two parts, the man and the woman. Nothing is said of the relationship between them except that they are indispensable to each other, and not until they are united do they together form a whole human being.”³⁷ They share bone, flesh, the breath of life, the image and likeness of God, creation, dominion over creation, and the mandate to be fruitful and multiply. Now that they can produce an observation of God / Narrator changes their social status and the second phase of the Marriage Formula is instituted.

This second phase of the Marriage Formula, Social Awareness, is the spiritual unification of the male and female. “Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh. (Genesis 2:24)” God establishes a social order: a male leaves his parents. This begins a relationship, a engagement, a promise. The idea that procreation is the only purpose for marriage is negated by the fact that marriage represents a pure relationship a male and female. The complete sharing and submission of self is the essence of marriage. “Nothing happens in the story of humankind until the woman joins the man upon the stage, and, from that point on, the story can only be told as the action and interaction of man and woman-in interaction with God and the rest of creation.”³⁸ It symbolizes the relationship God shares with God’s people, a relationship of commitment, covenant, and companionship, regardless of circumstances.

³⁷ Johs. Pederson, *Israel Its Life and Culture, The Family, The Father’s House and the People* (Copenhagen, Denmark: Oxford University Press, 1926), 61.

³⁸ Phyllis A. Bird, “Bone of My Bone and Flesh of My Flesh,” *Theology Today* Vol.50, No.4 (January 1993): 521.

God relational nature is in the image and likeness of God, Humanity (male and female). Relationships bear witness to and symbolize that it is not good for human beings to be alone. Social Awareness, interaction with others, meets the relational needs of Humanity. The last phase of the Marriage Formula is Sexual Awareness the reuniting of the two as one in the physical and thereby spiritual sense for the purpose of compliance with God's mandate to be fruitful and multiply, to fill the earth. The introduction of the miracle of Human Sexuality demanded a name change. The miracle Humanity had undergone was so comprehensive that Humanity, in its former physical sense, no longer exists. And, in the spiritual sense, existence is in the self of God and each other because within each self everything is shared. This demanded not only a change of name (identity) but also a defining change in role, the last part of the Marriage Formula. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh."³⁹ One has become two, two inseparable ones. This is a mystery; just as three can be one (Triune God), so also one is two. It is the sharing of the image and likeness of God that makes the one into two and it is the sharing of self that makes the two into one. Only together can both beings be called Humanity. They are of the same bone, flesh, image, and breath.

The narrator states, "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and they were not ashamed. (Genesis 2:25)." Shame is the result of condemnation and the point of the narrator's comment is that the man and his wife share each other visually, sexually, socially, and spiritually without condemnation.

³⁹ Genesis 2:24, Holy Bible KJV

It is not because the couple complies with the mandate of God that there is no shame (the result of condemnation) but because nakedness (sexual relations) takes place within the milieu of marriage by the design of God. Just as creation is the context for exercising dominion so is marriage the context for being fruitful and multiplying. “Marriage authorizes sexual relations. The honeymoon union is proper and holy (Heb. 13:14) only because the young couple is already married.”⁴⁰ Marriage is the only context in which Humanity (male and female) are to literally comply with the first mandate received from God: be fruitful and multiply.

Self Awareness, Social Awareness, and Sexual Awareness all occur within the context that God placed Humanity, female, woman, or wife. Contemporary society allows for each of them to be fruitful and multiply in one form or another. True Self, Social, and Sexual Awareness do not mandate every marriage to produce children, but they do require that all children be the product of marriage. And, to this end the role of the female in the family can be discerned and complied with.

Theological Foundation, The Third Epithet

The role of the female in the family continues to be examined by focusing on the names given the first woman in the creation narrative of Genesis. This last event takes place in the Garden of Eden after the perfection and innocence that accompanied the first two naming events have disappeared from the human experience. Sin has entered creation through disobedience.

⁴⁰ Jay E. Adams, *Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1980), 6.

The first man and woman are forever changed and the image and likeness of God that they possessed is now marred; God has judged all involved. With the words, “Because thou hast done this” the deceiver is cursed forever to move upon its belly with the doom that the Seed of the Woman will bruise its head with a sure and fatal blow. Without blame or mention of the obvious reason, God judges the *wife* within her context: marriage. The judgment not only results in the marital tension but also leaves compliance with the mandate “be fruitful and multiply” accompanied with pain that the wife must bear. Last, regarding the *husband*, for the reason clearly stated, God has cursed the ground (environment) with thorns and the like, which changes the nature and characteristics of work (i.e. to labor). That which was once a perfect purpose is now a task of toil. Disobedience changed everything forever.

Immediately after God has passed judgment on all involved in the event that ushered sin into man and creation, the *male* names the *female*. This naming event marks the beginning of them actually living out God’s judgment of their disobedience. With its context as marriage and the image and likeness of God marred because of sin, this discussion will now turn to the role of the female in the family based on the name she receives in Genesis 3:20. Just as in the other naming episodes, this naming event also depicts the character of the one being named, albeit in a reversed sort of way. In this naming, the wife is named by the husband based on her future role, a potential within her and that makes this naming event prophetic. The discussion will now focus on the role of the female in the family based on the name Eve and its depiction of Eve as the embodiment of characteristics, which at the time are only attributable to God, The Theological Mother.

There are four items that are fundamental to understanding the theological implications for the role of the female in the family based on the naming event of Genesis 3:20. First, in chapters 1, 2, and 3, the translated terms *adam* and *man* are used interchangeably and the term *male* does not share in this relationship. There is only one exception to this interchanging, and it is addressed in item four below. Secondly, it is only in Genesis 3:16, when God is judging the woman, that the term *husband* is used and even then it is completely different from any other term used to describe the male in the creation narratives of Genesis 1, 2, or 3. It is a term that identifies the male as married. However, and thirdly, and, without returning to the discussion on patriarchy it is sufficient to note that there is no specific term that names, identifies, or characterizes the woman in the state of marriage.

In Genesis 3:17, God's judgment of the male, the word translated *wife*, is the same word translated as woman throughout the creation narrative of Genesis 1, 2, and 3. Last, in Genesis 3:17, God's judgment is to a specific male being. Strong renders the term *Adam* (#121) as a proper noun. The implication is that Adam, as a name, was assigned by the creator. And, if the act of naming indicates supremacy or dominion (and the proper name was not assigned by God), then the narrator employed a patriarchal privilege. And last, when addressing the couple, the narrator only utilizes terms contextual to marriage (husband and wife) in the judgment section of the Creation Narrative, and this indicates to this author that the narrator understood the judgment to be in the context of marriage. This holds major implications for the role of the single female in the family in contemporary society because it clearly indicates that marriage is the only context in which experiencing labor pains should occur.

The significance of naming is personified when the first man names his wife, Eve. It is prophetic and reverential, prophetic because it describes a role she has not yet entered into and reverential because it is a name that defines actions attributable to God. “This was the name describing her function and destiny in spiritual history of which she was the beginning. Eve means life or life-giving or mother of all who have life, and her life is in us all.”⁴¹ She is the epitome of God. Within Eve is Humanity and Ishshah (God’ image and likeness / a relational being). Eve is God metaphorically, essentially, and spiritually. Eve is not the epitome of God because she possesses ascribed characteristics that depict God. Eve is the epitome of God because God is ascribed characteristics that depict Eve. Despite the fact that words relating feminine attributes to God are not often heralded or preached, these words are not only appropriate but also biblical. Moreover and as Johnson notes, “If it is not meant that God is male when masculine imagery is used, why the objection when female images are introduced?”⁴² Eve is a personification of God just as Adam is. Feminine talk and imagery of God are appropriate because God speaks of God’s self as such.

“For instance, metaphors such as God the father (Ps. 103:13), the husband (Hos. 2:15), the king (Ps. 98:6), and the warrior (Exod. 15:3) are diverse and partial expressions of the image of God as male. By the same token, metaphors such as God the pregnant woman (Is. 42:14), the mother (Is. 66:13, the midwife (Ps. 22:9), and the mistress (Ps. 123:2) are diverse and partial expressions of the image of God as female. All of these metaphors involve societal roles and relationships which the basic metaphor organizes without necessarily promoting.”⁴³

⁴¹ Herbert Lockyer, *All The Women of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House), 56.

⁴² Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1997), 34.

⁴³Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Fortress Press, 1978), 22.

The metaphor of God as mother is a societal and familial model for females. The preceding provided the foundation for discovering the role of the female in the family based on the name Eve and how imagery and metaphorical speech about God afford an understanding of God's character and work. "If women are created in the image of God, then God can be spoken of in female metaphors in as full and as limited a way as God is imaged in male ones, without talk of feminine dimensions reducing the impact of this imagery."⁴⁴ Therefore, language, masculine or feminine that depicts the character and work of God is acceptable.

The focus of this discussion now turns to the name Eve. First it will be defined and later it will be used to delineate the role of the female in the family based on its theological implications. Strong offers the following understanding.

"Strong # 2332 Chavvah Khav-vaw; causat. From 2331; life-giver; Chavvah or Eve the first woman: Eve. Strong #2331 Chavah Khaw-vah; a prim. Root; [comp. 2324,2421]; prop. To live, by impl. (intens.) to declare or show; -showStrong 2324 Chava (chald.) corresp. to 2331; to show: -shew; Strong 2421 chayah, khaw-yaw; a prim. Root [comp. 2331, 2424]; to live, whether lit or fig.; causat. To revive: keep (leave, make) alive, x certainly, give (promise) life, let suffer to) live, nourish up, preserve (alive), quicken, recover, repair, restore (to life), revive, (x God) save (alive, life, lives), x Surely. Be whole."⁴⁵

By definition, the name Eve clearly assigns characteristics that require more than human effort or will. The most basic rendering of the name Eve requires supernatural ability. Only God can give life.

⁴⁴ Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1997), 54.

⁴⁵ James C. Strong, *New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990), 37.

Only God can make alive, restore, nourish, preserve, or make whole, yet Adam names his wife as one who can do these things. This naming is a prophetic expression of honor. This naming assigns to the woman an ability that until now has been reserved for God and God alone; the giving of life was unique to God and is now to woman. And, it is the ability associated with this naming that makes this event distinctively different from the previous two events.

The first name, Humanity, was based on God's decision to make a being in God's own image and likeness. Ishshah, the second name, was based on God's decree, that it was not good for Humanity to be alone. This third name, Eve, is based on an honor and gift of God. The honor is discerned and spoken of as a prophetic personification of God.

The intent is not to elevate the first woman to God-status. God is the only possessor of creation power. And God is the only source of the breath of life. However, inasmuch as Eve will become that which through all human life must pass (woman) she personifies God. Neither is the intent to place Eve, the wife, above Adam, her husband. They are both made from the same stuff, raw material that God created. The raw material was not life or life giving. God was and is. Neither the first woman nor Adam, her husband, was life or life giving. Only God was and is. Yet Adam names her as such. The end result of the honor would be a miracle; a life would emerge from Eve. This distinctive honor is literally and physically the role of the female in the family based on the final naming episode in the Genesis Creation narrative.

In the first two naming episodes, the name and role of the female in the family was based on God's decrees (exercise dominion and the need for relationships). In this naming episode the name and role of the female in the family is based on the model of God. The model is the true and only life-giver, God. Adam discerns that his wife is blessed with a semblance of the model's ability and names her Eve, which means life-giver. The theological implications of the first female being given a name that assigns to her a role which at the time is only and can only be performed by God are significant because, based on the above definition, the role of the female is to be life giver (Strong 2332) and model (Strong 2324) who functions to preserve, restore, and reserve (Strong 2421). An examination of God as mother / life giver further supports this notion.

Throughout the *Bible* God's character is likened unto feminine qualities, functions, and behaviors. Johnson notes that, "Since it is women whose bodies bear, nourish, and deliver new persons into life and, as society is traditionally structured, are most often charged with the responsibility to nurture and raise them into maturity, language about God as mother carries a unique power to express human relationship to the mystery who generates and cares for everything."⁴⁶ For the men who recorded Salvation History to speak of God in terms normally attributed to a woman speaks to their awareness that God is neither male nor female but that within God's self are attributes that can be expressed in terms of male and female characteristics and roles.

⁴⁶ Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1997), 171.

The acts of God that depict feminine characteristics provide the guiding example for restructuring the role of the female in the family. Consider the relationship between the names Jehovah and Eve. “The name *Jehovah* is derived from the Hebrew verb *hawah*, “to be” or “being.” This word is almost exactly like the Hebrew verb, *Chayah*, “to live,” or “life” One can readily see the connection between being and life.”⁴⁷ As life-giver, God gives birth. As mother, God sustains. Strong #2331, records that the primary root of the name Eve not only means life-giver but also means to declare, show, or live in a manner whether literally or figuratively that nourishes, preserves, repairs, restores, or revives life. Eureka, the life-giver, is the ultimate and true paradigm and given that God is the source of life, God is the paradigm. Since God is the model for the role of the female in the family and since the name Eve depicts the character and nature of God and since Eve embodies all women, wives, and mothers, all women, wives, and mothers must model God. The conclusion is therefore that all women, wives, and mothers, must give and sustain life both literally and figuratively.

The role of the female as mother is unique among all human roles and relationships because it is in the bringing forth and sustaining of a life that the female in the family most honors and expresses God. Using literary analysis, Phyllis Trible connects God and the womb. She analyzes metaphors that speak about God and assign feminine qualities to God. Trible examines how God intervenes in the lives of three women by exercising control over their wombs and notes,

⁴⁷ Nathan Stone, *Names of God* (Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1944), 19.

“For Yahweh had closed every womb [kol-rehem] of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham’s wife...Therefore when God saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb rahmah]...As a preface to opening the womb, the phrase God remembers occurs in the third story (I Sam. 1: 1-20). Unlike, Leah, Hannah is loved by her husband. Yet she is sad because Yahweh had closed her womb [rahmah]... In these three stories the noun *womb* (*rehem*) is a physical object upon which the deity acts. Control of it belongs neither to women nor to their husbands, neither to the fetus nor to society. Only God closes and opens wombs in judgment, in blessing, and in mystery.”⁴⁸

Beyond delineating God’s control of the womb, Trible connects the womb to one of God’s communicable attributes, compassion. The biblical record repeatedly demonstrates God’s control over the womb (i.e. Sarah, Rachael, Leah, and Mary). The connection of God’s compassion to the womb is found in the root word *rhm*. “Difficult to translate in the fullness of its imagery, the Hebrew noun *rah^amîm* connotes simultaneously both a mode of being and the locus of that mode. In its singular form the *rehem* means ‘womb or uterus. In the plural, *rah^amîm*, this concrete meaning expands to the abstractions of compassion, mercy, and love.”⁴⁹ Eve is connected to the womb because God designed her in such a way that it dwells inside her and it gives life. God uses it to show compassion, love, and mercy. God is connected to the womb in that God controls it, God created it, and God created Eve, the one who bears the womb. God has likened God’s very self unto the womb. The womb connects God and Eve as God and no other beings are connected.

⁴⁸ Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Fortress Press, 1978), 34-35.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 33.

The relationship is unique. The womb represents life and God is the life-giver. The womb represents compassion. God is the source of compassion. The name Eve means life giver, and given that Eve is the possessor of the womb, her connection and personification of God is inescapable. And by way of the root word rhm, God is connected to the womb and Eve literally and figuratively. It is God who relates God's self to the womb and Eve with metaphoric speech such as, "You were unmindful of the Rock that bore you (*yiladeka*) and you forgot the God who writhed in labor pains with you (*meholeleka*). (*Duet.* 32:18). [note *yiladeka* almost always means 'that bore you' and only rarely can mean begot, as it is almost always translated."⁵⁰ It is in the womb that life begins and God causes the womb to conceive. God causes the womb to protect and nourish the life that God knows more fully than anyone else can. God declared to the Prophet Jeremiah "I knew you before I formed you in the womb or brought you from it" (cf. *Jer.* 1:5). For those not yet completely formed, the womb is a hiding place, a dressing room, a place of compassion, the designing room of El Shaddai, God Almighty.

God's birthing of Israel (figuratively) is likened unto a woman giving birth to her child. Figuratively, the womb is a metaphor for the compassion of God. The womb is a place where God demonstrates God's care, love, mercy, nourishing, bonding, protection, and the sharing of God's very self; all life begins with and in God's figurative compassion, the womb. God's design is that deep within the bowels of a wife, life is given and sustained by God, the life-giver, the Chavvah.

⁵⁰Leonard Swidler, *Biblical Affirmations of Woman* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The Westminster Press, 1979) 31.

When a child emerges from the womb, the place of nourishment, not only has the womb given life but a new relationship, a life-long relationship is forged between mother and child. The child may forget the mother and the mother may forget the child, but the relationship is forever settled in the womb of the mother. This relationship has the *Hebrew Bible*'s record of God's care for Israel as its model. God has an eternal relationship with those whom God has birthed. It is God who asked, "Can a woman forget her suckling child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee" (cf. Isaiah 49:15). This is the bond of mother and child, a bond that cannot be broken. This is a bond between God and his image and likeness. This is the bond between God and Chavvah (Eve), the mother of all living. Johnson summarizes,

"By now it is clear that biblical female symbols for God range far and wide over field of action and are not limited to the relationship and role of mothering. Yet this is a vitally important and uniquely female role, and another constellation of biblical symbols for God revolves around women's experience of bearing, birthing, and nursing new human beings. In texts widely scattered throughout Hebrew scriptures different aspects of being a mother – conceiving, being pregnant, going into labor, delivering, midwifing, nursing, carrying, rearing - become metaphors pointing to God's way of relating to the world."⁵¹

The metaphor of God as the paradigmatic mother is powerful; it indicates God's love and care. The metaphor of the womb indicates God's purpose and decree concerning the one being formed in the womb. "As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you."⁵²

⁵¹ Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is* (New York: Crossroad), 100.

⁵² Isaiah 66:13, Holy Bible, KJV

This speaks to the sustaining works of God in the lives of those birthed by God. The power of the metaphor of the womb is that it represents the power of God beyond the physical and chronological realm, the realm humanity waits to enter. God as life-giver is the model for the female in the family. God affirms women in childbirth. God is the perfection of the loving, caring, nourishing, nurturing, chastising, and guiding mother. The bond between a mother and her child cannot be broken. The bond between God and God's children cannot be broken. God as the womb is the model for mothers because when the child dwells in the womb God's plans and purposes are instilled into that life.

This concludes the examination of naming in the ancient Hebrew culture for determining the role of the female in the African American family. The primary premise of the discussion was that the role of the female in the family could be accurately discerned from the naming episodes of the Genesis creation narrative because sin, contemporary society's decadence, and lack of moral constraint are the essence of the change in the family's structure, composition, and function. Women must look to the *Bible* to determine what should be the role for the female in the family, society, and creation. Although the structure of the family has changed significantly, it has not and cannot transcend the biblical principles and mandates of the creation narrative. All women are part of Humanity and therefore must exercise dominion. All women can enter into relationships but only those who are married have God's approval to literally give birth. All other possessors of the womb must give life by character as God does.

All women, literal and figuratively, must mimic the paradigm of God.

Women's liberation can open social doors, but it cannot supercede the mandate and model of God. Equal rights can remove some of the patriarchal, androcentric, and even misogynistic stumbling blocks that have long kept women beneath the feet of men rather than at the foot of the cross, but nothing can rise above God and the fact that women are made in God's image and likeness. It is therefore encumbered upon me to reconstruct the role of the African-American female to empower her children and family based on the names given her in the creation narrative of Genesis.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

The methodology at work in this discussion involves a case study performed at a Miami Dade Housing Project. This case study will be used later as the foundation for a Family Literacy Model that will satisfy all governmental legalities without compromising the liberty of the church. Although not everyone was pleased with President Bush's order, there is no question about the impact it has already had on the delivery and quality of the social services and health care rendered and received in the United States. Christian organizations now stand shoulder to shoulder with the United States Government in meeting the needs of the less fortunate in America.

This discussion will now present a historical account of the founding, incorporating and development of a Faith Based Ministry that will serve as the implementation foundation for designing of a Family Literacy Model. This will reconstruct the role of the African-American female such that she will be enabled to empower the development of her children using Faith Based Initiatives. This model, developed, will satisfy the legal requisites of the state of Florida without compromising the principles of the *Bible*.

On June 11, 2002, five years after God had given the name *Doulas*, six years after formal preparation began, eight years after acceptance of the call, and even years after her conversion experience, this formed Doulas Ministries Inc.

Doulas Ministries Inc.(DMI), was incorporated as a not-for-profit organization in the great state of Florida (Appendix E-1) Three months later, on September 13, 2002, DMI was granted non-profit status by the Internal Revenue Service (Appendix E-2).

The Chavvah Project is a family empowerment project made possible by the Faith Based Initiative. It is designed to address family restoration and preservation through education. The design is to incorporate Florida's educational standards into a program that focuses on inter-generational illiteracy, poverty, and family deterioration. The goal is a model of partnership between government and the community of faith; a partnership committed to the elimination of the inter-generational cycles of poverty, illegitimacy, illiteracy, despair, and crime that have hindered, harmed, plagued, and paralyzed the African American female and family.

Method of Inquiry

The methodology of the Chavvah Project is qualitative in its approach because it concerns the examination and interpretation of living conditions at the Circle Plaza Rainbow Gardens Housing Projects of Perrine, Florida. The original proposal was for residents to respond to both pre and post-tests that were designed to measure how the mother's dropping out of high school influenced the educational success or failure of her children. However, due to management changes, staff reassignments, and recent federal budget cuts, all pending projects had to be abandoned or indefinitely delayed. The time and effort was not wasted because it set in motion an even more rewarding opportunity, which presented itself when a phone call was received from the Regional Director of the Miami Dade Housing Authority (MDHA).

The caller requested that I attend a meeting at the South Dade Regional office to discuss becoming a service provider at the Circle Plaza/Rainbow Gardens Housing Project. The caller stated that the invitation was in response to an official request for a partnership and approval to become a service provider for residents of Miami-Dade's Circle Plaza /Rainbow Gardens Housing Project (see Appendix C1, C2). November 10, 2003, in the office of Dee Walton, Regional Director of MDHA), Mrs. D. Strozier, Mr. Mackey and I discussed Doulas Ministries Inc. being granted permission to conduct on-site classes.

The meeting took the form of a panel interview, during which a historical account of DMI was presented and proof of its 501C3 status was provided. The conversation related that an application to the Internal Revenue Service for official Not-For-Profit status was submitted June 30, 2002, as a part of a final project for obtaining a Doctorate of Ministry degree from United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, and that tax exempt status was granted on September 30, 2002 (see Appendix E-2). It was explained that the need for family restoration and preservation through education was evidenced by all the local, state, and federal reports concerning the target area but the crux of any project would inevitably amount to whether the residents believed there was a need for or possibility of family restoration and preservation through education.

After housing management's many expressions of doubt concerning the resident's willingness to respond to still another outsider's claim of "We just want to help" Ms. Walton requested that a Needs Assessment be performed. Mrs. Walton stated that if the results of the Needs Assessment, hereafter NA, indicated a need and willingness of tenants to participate, then DMI would be given access to rent-free space for classroom instruction.

It was agreed that from December 1, 2003 to December 10, 2003, from 9A.M.to Noon, space in the rental office would be provided for the performance of the requested NA. The MDHA chose the time, date, and place because it is when all household heads would come to the office to pay their rent and while waiting they could voluntarily complete the NA. The MDHA agreed that they would not require that the names nor any other respondent identifying information be divulged or shared. It was further agreed that Doulas Ministries Inc. would provide the MDHA with a written summary of the NA and submit a full budget surrounding the cost of building and sustaining an Adult Education Program if the NA indicated that such a program were needed and desired.

The NA, hereafter called the Case Study, focused on these areas: Distinctness, Family, Healthiness, Educational, Economics, and Spirituality. Distinctiveness related to personal information such as age, gender, and their marital status. Family addressed every member of the household and his/her statistics. Healthiness focused on matters such as insurance, medical and dental care, and ill health behaviors such as smoking.

The Educational section was concerned with the educational achievements of the head of household head, and the Economic section concerned the employment and monetary status of the household. Last, the area of Spirituality dealt with religious inclinations such as church attendance, prayer, and parent, child, and church interaction. There is a total of 286 housing units in the housing Development, and 30 heads of household responded to the questions and engaged in conversation during the case study. Considering that the case study was limited to those entering the rent office rather than door to door and the study lasted for only ten days between 9 A.M. and Noon, it is favorable to report that a total of 30 (10 percent) residents responded.

This author realizes that many factors fuse and create the conditions that causes one to be unemployed, uneducated, and a single parent and therefore makes no claim that feigns to address, identify, or alleviate all such factors. Such a claim would be pious and certainly beyond mortal ability. This is a case study of the residents of Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens, a foundation to be built upon over the next few years. The following account describes the case study and inform the reader as to why this case study qualifies as Action Research (AR), describe the participant selection process, describe the data collection / interview process, interpret the data collected, and note significant findings.

The methodology was definitely Action Research (AR) for several reasons. First, “AR aims to increase the ability of the involved community or organization members to control their own destinies more effectively and to keep improving their capacity to do so”¹ This author detected a certain amount of helplessness when the Residents Council stated that the residents had grown tired or people acting on their behalf for their good or at least pretending to. It was explained to the board that residents would be directly involved in their destinies by choosing to complete the questionnaire, place their names on a potential class participant list, or enroll in any parent / child interactive activities designed to strengthen the family and improve literacy simultaneously.

Action Research is a “Democratic processes supporting the creation of new knowledge that potentially can be liberating. Obviously, then, the inquiry process has to aim at the solution of problems important to the local participants, and the knowledge produced by the inquiry must increase participants’ control over their own situation.”²

¹ Davydd J. Greenwood and Morten Levin, *Introduction to Action Research: Social Research for Social Change* (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications Inc., 1998), 6.

² Ibid., 77.

The method of inquiry was a questionnaire and conversation. Each participant was told the same thing: " DMI was interested in becoming an on-site Educational Service Provider and part of that process was the performance of a Needs Assessment (NA) to determine if educational services were not only needed but wanted as well." During the performance of the NA, the residents allowed the interviewer to enter their context through their opinions, perspectives, and experiences. This interviewer shared their lives by hearing their words of frustration, self-condemnation, confessions, spent opportunities, and sighs of hopelessness.

This actual NA began with the notion that one factor would emerge as the cause for the inter-generational illiteracy that plagued these women. Suffice it to say that this notion died quickly. On December 26, 2003, the results of the ten day Needs Assessment and a project proposal titled *The Chavvah Project* (Appendix C-3) were delivered to Milady Feliciano, the Site Manager of Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens Housing Project and the regional office. The following chapter is a narrative of the Needs Assessment Field Experience.

CHAPTER FIVE

CASE STUDY - RAINBOW GARDENS / CIRCLE PLAZA

The women and children living in Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens start their day early in the morning because R. R. Moton community school opens early to serve breakfast to many children who will not be served breakfast at home. The Children walk to school, and the neighborhood police officers have done an excellent job of ensuring that loiterers and unseemly characters do not block their path. This is commendable considering that not too long ago these children had to walk in the street to avoid stepping on vagrants and drunks who had spent the night on the sidewalks.

The Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens Housing Projects are located in the oldest section of Perrine, Florida. It is bounded on the West side by Homestead Avenue, formerly known as 'the strip'. People often spoke of the many stabbings that took place on Homestead Avenue. People used to say "It was just as easy to get stabbed on Homestead Avenue as it was to get a pack of cigarettes." Today this avenue is the location of a gym, a health clinic, several successful African-American owned and operated businesses, an elementary school, and several churches. The freshly painted government ran social services buildings and businesses give the impression of prosperity and improvement, yet this impression is an erroneous one.

Just beyond those beautiful structures are people stricken by poverty and a sense of hopelessness. The buildings are meant to herald Dade County's Neighborhood Revitalization Plan; really, they signal a need for God's plan for people revitalization.

Along the west side of Homestead Avenue, near its Northern end, is a wall that stands about seven feet tall. This wall hides and surrounds the occupants of approximately 300 Miami Dade Housing Authority Projects. This case study involved 30 of the residents of Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens Housing Project. The participants became part of the case study through a random selection process. Residents that came to the rental office from December 1, 2003 to December 10, 2003 between the hours of 9AM to 1PM were automatically included in the process. Ten percent, 30 residents participated in this Case Study, which examined Distinctiveness, Healthiness, Education, Economics, and Spirituality. The following narrates the resident's responses.

Distinctiveness - Analysis and Observations

There were a total of 30 respondents, 29 Females and one male. Of the 29 female respondents, 27 were African American and two were Hispanic. Concerning marital status of the 30 respondents, two were married, one was divorced, two did not respond and 25 were single. Eight of the female respondents have children less than two years old. All the respondents stated that the primary school for their children was R.R. Moton Elementary, which operates at 101 percent of capacity and is one of the two public schools located in the Perrine Revitalization Area. Most of the parents stated that they were former R.R. Moton students.

Fifteen of the respondents stated they had not completed high school. One parent was attending court ordered Parenting classes. One respondent's children were wards of the court and another respondent's children had been removed from the home and placed in the custody of their maternal grandmother.

Healthiness

Only 16 persons responded to the inquiry concerning whether they have health insurance. Of the 16 who responded, five said they did not have any type of health insurance. When questioned about their children receiving annual checkups, three of the five who were without insurance stated that took their children for annual medical examinations at their own expense. One respondent reported that she was waiting to be approved for Trust Care (county insurance). Five respondents were obviously ashamed of having to admit that they had children but no health insurance covering them. The question concerning cigarette smoking yielded a surprising result because not as many respondents smoked as were expected. Perhaps this is because of the efforts of anti-smoking campaigns to prevent the tobacco industry from marketing advertisements that target young African-Americans. During the 1990's, health activists were concerned about the cigarette industry's appeal to young African Americans as prospective smokers by giving the misleading impression that smoking was cool and fashionable. Five respondents stated that they smoked and would quit if help were made available. The age range of the smokers wanting to quit if help were available was 19-53 years old.

Concerning their mental well-being, three respondents noted that they were depressed and, when given a referral to the Department of Health and Human Services; each of them said they doubted if they would follow-up on it. Perhaps it is significant that the respondents who stated that they were depressed were all above the age of 25, did not receive child support, and did not finish high school, but two-thirds of them attended church regularly with their children.

Education

There were 30 respondents to the Educational section of the Needs Assessment and 99 percent of them were high school dropouts; this means that is only .9% (3 persons), among the respondents had a high school diploma. When Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens Housing Development statistic are contrasted with the entire area of Perrine the picture reflects the area because Perrine has a dropout rate of 48 percent. While this is significant, it is less disturbing than the 99% concentration of high school dropouts found in the projects. It indicates that some high school dropouts end up living in low income projects. The number of dropouts concentrated within the walls of Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens is also indicated by the fact that they reside there because income and family size are the main determinants for acceptance in Miami-Dade Housing projects. The logic is that the higher the educational achievement, the higher the earning potential, and higher earnings are usually translated into better living conditions. Moreover, the higher the income versus family size, the less likely an individual is to be accepted into housing projects intended to provide decent living arrangements for low-income families.

Respondents were also questioned regarding their willingness to attend GED or Adult Basic Education classes; 56.25% signed up for the classes and 100% stated that a tutor would be needed to complete the curriculum. The respondents were questioned about their ability and willingness to help their children with their homework or to read Bible stories to them as part of a bonding process. Several parents indicated a desire to help their children with homework but noted that they did not have the patience or academic skills to do so. A few parents noted that their lack of patience would lead to corporeal punishment if their children did not follow instructions. This identified a need to provide parents with a class on how to tutor and help their children with homework. This class would enable beneficial and emotional bonding between parent and child.

Economics

The first indication of a respondent's economic state is the fact that she is a resident of the Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens Housing Development. Families living below or at the poverty level are eligible to live in HUD Housing Projects, since the decisive factor for being a project resident is income and family size. It is no wonder that all 286 units are filled when one considers that 46 percent of all households had incomes below \$10,000, regardless of the size of the family. The number of dependents is also used to determine eligibility for HUD housing, and this is important because an income of \$25,000 a year for a single mother and one child will meet a lot more of life's daily needs than an income of \$25,000 a year for a single mother and five children.

Fifteen persons responded to the employment question, and six of them stated that they were presently employed. The time range of their employment spanned from three months to 13 years. Of the six employed, one was behind in her rent and two respondents stated their electrical service had been disconnected within the last year. Perhaps the most disturbing information shared by the residents concerning their economic / job status was the very incident that delayed this author's data collection process. It seems that the women living in Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens Housing Development had begun to use the community center for an ad hoc day care facility that operated for over a year with the working and non-working mothers providing regularly scheduled care for each other's children free of charge. Two of the residents allege that housing management who had known about the makeshift day care center since its inception, were now attempting to disavow knowledge of it because housing inspectors are now attempting to determine who authorized the use of the residence facility as a day care center and who is ultimately and legally responsible for the utility bills. According to one resident, a parent who refused to volunteer at the day care center was not allowed to use the services of the center and complained to the regional manager. This complaint about the ad hoc day care led to the shutting down of the day care. Additionally, even though several respondents disagree with this version of what happened, they all agree that the matter led to all the women having to make other arrangements for their children. Even worse was one mother's words: "Now I'll have to quit my job because I don't have the money for a baby sitter."

The women bonded to help one another, and while this is commendable, it is not necessarily safe because only one participant in the day care center had completed the required 395 hours of Child Guidance Care and Management Service courses required by the State of Florida to obtain a license to operate a private daycare facility. At the time of this printing, the matter had not been resolved and many of the residents have moved on to having their older children act as babysitters for the younger children. This practice, while risky, may be the only alternative these women may have because all the respondents stated they could not afford the high cost of childcare. The obvious solution appears to be to provide on site training Child Care Certification classes for those women who meet the legal criteria and standard to work with children in the State of Florida. This solution is an intricate part of the Chavvah Project.

Spirituality

Liberal Christians tend to see inter-generational illiteracy and teen pregnancy attached to a set of circumstances that people do not consciously choose, while the conservative Christians see the same problem as the result of a person's own doing or undoing, given the opportunity for education in the United States of America. Shattered dreams, hopelessness, unemployment, and depression break the human spirit. Regardless of one's opinion, it can be concluded that these conditions of poverty and illiteracy were not the choices of the young children found living in them. Besides, if any people knew and followed Jesus, it was the poor and marginalized. The following is a summary of the residents of Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens responses to questions on Spirituality.

Most of the respondents associated themselves with some form of traditional spiritual activity such as daily devotion, worship service, prayer, or Bible study. Several parents stated that they do not attend church but send their children because their parents had sent them when they were children. These parents went on to say that they do not go to church today because they were forced to do so as children. Five of the respondents indicated that they wanted some kind of relationship with God but were not sure if they wanted it to bear resemblance to the traditional relationship people have with the church, its members, and its pastors. One young woman stated that before she dropped out of school and had a baby at 16 years old, she was very active in the church. Now she says, "The church turned against me." She stated that she sang in the youth choir before she got pregnant but now is ostracized and criticized by the old members and avoided by the young ones. "This is why I no longer like church." When asked to sing, she stood up and without shame or hesitation sang a touching rendition of Amazing Grace. When invited to church, she eagerly agreed, provided that she did not have to say or do anything. This young woman's distaste for the church was not so much based on how the church treated her as it was that the older members were requiring her to get up and apologize for the sin of fornication and child produced by it. She refused to comply. She reasoned that other girls and adults were doing the same thing she did "They just had not got caught."

Also very interesting is the fact that in each situation which the mother noted that her children did not attend spiritual activities, the children were 12 years or older. Even for children older than 18 and living at home the cutoff age for church attendance was 13. This is the same age that teen pregnancy, school dropout, and truancy begin.

The only occurrences where children younger than 13 years old did not attend church or Sunday School on a regular basis were cases where the mother had not attended church as a part of her growing up experience. When questioned about whether there was a specific time set aside for family prayer and devotion each parent, 100%, said no.

Finally, a young mother stated that she did not like church because of how the church addressed the in-service dedication of newborn infants. In most churches, if the parents are married, the baby's dedication is performed as a part of the worship service. If the parents are unmarried, the dedication takes place in a private setting such as a home. This young mother called this practice discriminatory because "Every one is supposed to be treated equal in the house of God and, besides, once God forgives somebody that's it. And, who knows what they are doing?" After a lengthy discussion of the practice of dedicating babies in the church and the message conveyed by only bringing married couples up before the congregation, the young lady held on to her view and the anger and hurt she felt after being turned down for an in-service dedication of her newborn child. The most promising hope concerning spirituality came in that 100 percent of the respondents knew that Jesus is the resurrected Son of God, who will return to judge the living and the dead. The original answers of the respondents indicated little or no need at all for spiritual intervention, education, or regeneration in Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens. However, reality is different from appearance. The reality is in the eyes of the children who do not know the Lord's Prayer.

Reality is parents professing to read the Bible who cannot even read their children's elementary school homework. Reality is almost 100 percent of those who responded by saying they have a spiritual component in their lives were unable to call the name of their pastor. These people have been exposed to church but not to love. In fact, they are churched far too well to deny the existence of God yet un-churched just enough to ignore God.

CHAPTER SIX

REFLECTIONS, SUMMARY, AND CONCLUSIONS

Reflections

Family restoration and preservation through education is the goal of the Chavvah Project. The women of Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens were the case study for Reconstructing the Role of the African American Female to Empower Her Children's Development Using Faith Based Initiatives. The request to perform a Needs Assessment at the Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens Housing Project was first thought of as a test of this interviewer's willingness to interact with the people; it turned out to be a test of the people's willingness to interact with the interviewer.

While being interviewed by the Resident's Council Board and the Housing Authority's District Manager, the Residents Council's President remarked, "We are tired of church people coming in *our* project and getting HUD money for *our* children from *our* management and then using *our* money for *their* churches and *their* children." This is the this author really understood just how much she represented the Body of Christ and cannot be separated from it even when and if its members cause pain and shame. It is an act of trust when people allow you to enter their community and examine their lives. The reality is that this interviewer has been taught a great lesson on sharing and poverty, a lesson, which has made her forever indebted to the residents of the Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens Housing Project.

Summary

Along the West side of Homestead Avenue at its northern end is a wall, a wall that stands approximately seven feet tall, a wall that hides the Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens Housing Project, a wall that prevents the houses and its residents from being seen. This low income housing project is kept from blending into the business community on the West, from blending into the community of single family homes on the East and South and from blending into the up and coming business community on the north. The wall stands like the metaphorical wall in the movie *The Women of Brewster Place*, which was produced by Oprah Winfrey and Carole Isenberg. The movie presented the intertwined lives of several African-American females struggling to survive after suffering racism, abuse, neglect, familial conflict, and social rejection. Like *The Women of Brewster Place*, the women of Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens live as poor, abused, poverty stricken, misjudged, uneducated women. The parallel between these women becomes eerie when one notices that the impenetrable wall around Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens also isolates the women on its inside from the brighter, more prosperous community on its outside. Like the wall around *The Women of Brewster Place*, it isolates women from the sun that represents daily regeneration and renewed hope.

The Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens' wall surrounds approximately 300 HUD units that house families headed by single, poor, uneducated, African-American females. The Chavvah Project is designed to assist these women in overcoming the struggles in life that traditional educational resources do not and cannot address.

Conclusions

Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens Housing Project is said to be one of the most dangerous places in Perrine and one of the most dangerous housing projects in South-Miami Dade County. However, in fairness to the Miami-Dade Housing Authority and the residents of Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens Housing Projects, it must be stated that unknown things and unknown people are always thought to be dangerous. Even the poor, slighted, uneducated, unsaved, marginalized, un-evangelized, blind, sick, lame, ignorant, sinful, and the forgotten are considered too dangerous by those who do not know of and are unwilling to learn of their plight. This question is, "Where else can effective ministry take place if not among these?" In addition, where else can this author go and see herself, be herself, and even expose herself and the scars and blows life has dealt her without being ashamed or judged by the self-righteous? The answer is Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens Housing Project.

The Needs Assessment also addressed cigarette smoking as a part of healthiness. First, both children and parents living in Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens would be healthier if smoking cessation classes were available to residents. Secondly, since the children of smokers are more likely to smoke, the children of parents successfully completing smoking cessation classes would be less likely to smoke and thereby be healthier children overall. Another major point for future discussion concerning these women was that only one woman stated that she received child support from the father of her children. All the other women do not receive child support from the fathers of their children, even though the educational and economic well being of a child is the responsibility of both parents.

Single, African-American females have a responsibility to ensure that their children not only receive the best medical care but also the best spiritual and secular education possible from the school system and the church. Thus, it is crucial for inter-generational dropout parents to accept responsibility for their children and empower them by modeling the responsible behavior of obtaining a high school diploma as a rite of passage into adulthood.

Because of the influence a parent has on her children, teen parents must be required to complete high school while receiving the guidance and training that will promote social responsibility and spiritual maturity. The first and most important model in a child's life should be the parent, an educated and responsible parent. If single, African-American female, high school, dropout parents are not mandated to complete high school, the state will continue to raise, rear, and reprimand young people who never received a fair shot at becoming academically, socially, and spiritually responsible, mature citizens. Income earning potential is directly related to the educational level of the person earning the income. Inter-generational illiteracy will continue to perpetuate poverty and low-paying jobs until a mandatory returning to school is required of all teen parents. If financial stability is predictable based on a literacy level, then a high school diploma is the doorway to economic deliverance from poverty.

Adult Basic Education /General Education Diploma curriculums for young, single teen, African American female parents must move beyond the standard curriculum and into classes that equip parents with the life skills that are supported by Spiritual training. An African-American female may change her habits, but only God can change her heart and enable her to model behaviors that will empower her children.

The church must revisit its rites and the rules that govern them. The concern for babies born out-of-wedlock and fornication is a legitimate one, but it should not eliminate access to the table of fellowship. Practices that uphold the sanctity of marriage and life must be scripturally reconciled with each other. Considering the practices of most churches concerning child dedications, the babies of mothers residing in Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens are highly unlikely to be dedicated since less than one percent (two) of the respondents stated they have ever married and 100% said they had no plans to marry. However, this does not alleviate the church of its responsibility to lovingly confirm the image and likeness of God in all human beings, especially those who are the youngest and most vulnerable images and likenesses of God who live in the projects of Perrine, Florida. Local congregations must be innovative without being hypocritical and must be godly without being gods and goddess.

The need for ministry in Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens is great, not just for family restoration and preservation through education but also for spiritual transformation through spiritual regeneration. Ministry must prepare tables and arrange to receive all, even those caught in the very act. This is an opportunity for the Body of Christ to live out the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. The Chavvah Project has received letters of support from various community organizations, churches, and politicians (Appendix G). And, many concerned citizens have agreed to serve as spiritual and program advisors. Perhaps the most important human factor that can be mentioned about the Chavvah Project is that residents of the Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens housing projects will serve on its Advisory Board and several steering committees.

Recently, the Regional Manager of the Miami Dade Housing Authority informed Doulas Ministries Inc. that she would be supporting our efforts to begin classes as soon as possible. This commitment gives the women living in the Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens Housing Project hope for themselves and their children. The women who participated in this study are contacted on a regular basis and given updates on the progress of Doulas Ministries Inc. attempts to obtain funding for the Chavvah Project. The Chavvah Project, a Faith Based Initiative provides women, children, and families with opportunities to become self-determining and self sufficient in all aspects of life. The Founding Fathers of the United States of America thought initiatives such as this so fundamental to the well being of the country that they ensured future compliance by limiting the power that government could exercise concerning the matter. The Faith-Based Initiative is an effort that the Founding Fathers would certainly approve of because the Faith Based Initiative is an exercise in compassion, citizenship, ingenuity, fellowship, cooperation, and love.

APPENDIX A
PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE ORDERS

EXECUTIVE ORDER 13198

Presidential Executive order 13198,



For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
January 29, 2001

Executive Order**Establishment of White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives**

By the authority vested in me as President of the United States by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to help the Federal Government coordinate a national effort to expand opportunities for faith-based and other community organizations and to strengthen their capacity to better meet social needs in America's communities, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Policy. Faith-based and other community organizations are indispensable in meeting the needs of poor Americans and distressed neighborhoods. Government cannot be replaced by such organizations, but it can and should welcome them as partners. The paramount goal is compassionate results, and private and charitable community groups, including religious ones, should have the fullest opportunity permitted by law to compete on a level playing field, so long as they achieve valid public purposes, such as curbing crime, conquering addiction, strengthening families and neighborhoods, and overcoming poverty. This delivery of social services must be results oriented and should value the bedrock principles of pluralism, nondiscrimination, evenhandedness, and neutrality.

Sec. 2. Establishment. There is established a White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (White House OFBCI) within the Executive Office of the President that will have lead responsibility in the executive branch to establish policies, priorities, and objectives for the Federal Government's comprehensive effort to enlist, equip, enable, empower, and expand the work of faith-based and other community organizations to the extent permitted by law.

Sec. 3. Functions. The principal functions of the White House OFBCI are, to the extent permitted by law: (a) to develop, lead, and coordinate the Administration's policy agenda affecting faith-based and other community programs and initiatives, expand the role of such efforts in communities, and increase their capacity through executive action, legislation, Federal and private funding, and regulatory relief;

- (b) to ensure that Administration and Federal Government policy decisions and programs are consistent with the President's stated goals with respect to faith-based and other community initiatives;
- (c) to help integrate the President's policy agenda affecting faith-based and other community organizations across the Federal Government;
- (d) to coordinate public education activities designed to mobilize public support for faith-based and community nonprofit initiatives through volunteerism, special projects, demonstration pilots, and public-private partnerships;
- (e) to encourage private charitable giving to support faith-based and community initiatives;
- (f) to bring concerns, ideas, and policy options to the President for assisting, strengthening, and replicating successful faith-based and other community programs;
- (g) to provide policy and legal education to State, local, and community policymakers and public officials seeking ways to empower faith-based and other community organizations and to improve the opportunities, capacity, and expertise of such groups;
- (h) to develop and implement strategic initiatives under the President's agenda to strengthen the institutions of civil society and America's families and communities;
- (i) to showcase and herald innovative grassroots nonprofit organizations and civic initiatives;
- (j) to eliminate unnecessary legislative, regulatory, and other bureaucratic barriers that impede effective faith-based and other community efforts to solve social problems;
- (k) to monitor implementation of the President's agenda affecting faith-based and other community organizations; and
- (l) to ensure that the efforts of faith-based and other community organizations meet high standards of excellence and accountability.

Sec. 4. Administration. (a) The White House OFBCI may function through established or ad hoc committees, task forces, or interagency groups.

(b) The White House OFBCI shall have a staff to be headed by the Assistant to the President for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. The White House OFBCI shall have such staff and other assistance, to the extent permitted by law, as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this order. The White House OFBCI operations shall begin no later than 30 days from the date of this order.

(c) The White House OFBCI shall coordinate with the liaison and point of contact designated by each executive department and agency with respect to this initiative.

(d) All executive departments and agencies (agencies) shall cooperate with the White House OFBCI and provide such information, support, and assistance to the White House OFBCI as it may request, to the extent permitted by law.

(e) The agencies' actions directed by this Executive Order shall be carried out subject to the availability of appropriations and to the extent permitted by law.

Sec. 5. Judicial Review. This order does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

GEORGE W. BUSH

THE WHITE HOUSE,

January 29, 2001.⁸²

⁸² President George W. Bush, *Executive Order #13198, Establishment of White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives*” Available online at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/>

Presidential Executive order 13198,

Remarks by the President in Announcement of the Faith-Based Initiative

Indian Treaty Room

Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building

10:55 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. Thank you all for coming. I take great joy in making this announcement. It's going to be one of the most important initiatives that my administration not only discusses, but implements.

First, it's good to have so many groups represented here -- religious and non-religious; Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, and Muslim; foundations and other non-profits. I want to thank you all for coming.

This is a collection of some of the finest America has got to offer -- people who lead with their hearts, and in turn, have changed the communities in which they live for the better. This meeting is a picture of the strength and diversity and compassion of our country.

This is a diverse group, but we share things in common. They provide more than practical help to people in need. They touch and change hearts. And for this, America is deeply appreciative.

Everyone in this room knows firsthand that there are still deep needs and real suffering in the shadow of America's affluence. Problems like addiction and abandonment and gang violence, domestic violence, mental illness and homelessness. We are called by conscience to respond.

As I said in my inaugural address, compassion is the work of a nation, not just a government. It is more than the calling of politicians; it is the calling of citizens. It is citizens who turn mean streets into good neighborhoods. It is citizens who turn cold cities into real communities.

It is one of the great goals of my administration to invigorate the spirit of involvement and citizenship. We will encourage faith-based and community programs without changing their mission. We will help all in their work to change hearts while keeping a commitment to pluralism.

I approach this goal with some basic principles: Government has important responsibilities for public health or public order and civil rights. Yet government -- and government will never be replaced by charities and community groups. Yet when we see social needs in America, my administration will look first to faith-based programs and community groups, which have proven their power to save and change lives. We will not fund the religious activities of any group, but when people of faith provide social services, we will not discriminate against them.

As long as there are secular alternatives, faith-based charities should be able to compete for funding on an equal basis, and in a manner that does not cause them to sacrifice their mission. And we will make sure that help goes to large organizations and to small ones as well. We value large organizations with generations of experience. We also value neighborhood healers, who have only the scars and testimony of their own experience.

Tomorrow I will begin turning these principles into a legislative agenda. I will send to Congress a series of ideas and proposals. Today, I want to raise the priority and profile of these issues within my own administration. I want to ensure that faith-based and community groups will always have a place at the table in our deliberations.

In a few moments, I will sign two executive orders. The first executive order will create a new office, called the White House Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives. The head of this office will report directly to me and be charged with important responsibilities. He will oversee our initiatives on this issue. He will make sure our government, where it works with private groups, is fair and supportive. And he will highlight groups as national models so others can learn from them.

The second executive order will clear away the bureaucratic barriers in several important agencies that make private groups hesitate to work with government. It will establish centers in five agencies -- Justice, HUD, HHS, Labor and Education -- to ensure greater cooperation between the government and the independent sector. These centers will report back on regulatory barriers to working with non-profit groups, and make recommendations on how those barriers can be removed.

I have put this broad effort into the hands of two exceptional people -- first, Steve Goldsmith, known as one of the most innovative mayors in America, who pioneered ways to promote community efforts. He will continue to advise me on these issues. And I have asked Steve to serve on the board of the Corporation for National Service.

This organization has done some good work in mobilizing volunteers of all ages. I've asked Steve to report to me on how we can make the corporation do better, and to get help where it's most needed.

And secondly, Professor John Dilulio will head the new office I am announcing today. He is one of the most influential social entrepreneurs in America. I can't tell you how honored I am for him to leave his post in academia to join us. He is the author of a respected textbook on American government. He has a servant's heart on the issues that we will confront. He's worked with disadvantaged children. He has been a major force in mobilizing the city of Philadelphia to support faith-based and community groups.

It's a fantastic team. I'm honored to have them on my team. I look forward to hearing from them, as well as I look forward to working with the people in this room and the social entrepreneurs all across America who have heard the universal call to love a neighbor like they'd like to be loved themselves; to exist and work hard, not out of the love of money, but out of the love of their fellow human beings. I'm absolutely convinced the great fabric of the nation exists in neighborhoods, amongst unsung heroes who do heroic acts on a daily and hourly basis. It's the fabric of the country that makes America unique. It is -- the power of promise that makes the future so promising is the power of the missions that stand behind me.

This is an effort that will be an effort from, now the second week of my administration to the last week of my administration, because I am confident that this initiative, when fully implemented, will help us realize the dream that America, its hopes, its promise, its greatness, will extend its reach throughout every single neighborhood, all across the land.

And now it is my honor to sign the two executive orders.

APPENDIX B

NAME AND IDENTITIES IN GENESIS

NAME AND IDENTITIES IN GENESIS

Genesis	Name	Strong **	TWOT ***
1:26	Man	120	25a
1:27	Man	120	25a
	Male	2145	551e
	Female	5347	1409b
2: 22	Man	120	25a
	Woman	802	137a
2: 23	Adam	120	25a
	.	802	137a
	Man	376	83a
2: 24	Man	376	83a
	Wife	802	137a
2:25	Man	120	25a
	Wife	802	137a
3:8	Adam	120	25a

APPENDIX B (cont'd)

NAME AND IDENTITIES IN GENESIS

3:12	Man	802	137a
	Woman	802	137a
3:13	Woman	802	137a
3:15	Woman	802	137a
3:16	Woman	802	137a
	Husband	376	83a
3:17	Adam	121	25a
	Wife	802	137a
3:20	Adam	120	25a
	Wife	802	137a
	Eve	2332	****
3:21	Adam	120	25a
	Wife	802	137a
3:22	Man	120	25a
3:24	Man	120	25a

*King James Version

**The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible

***Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament

**** Not addressed by the Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament

APPENDIX C
PARTNERSHIP, OUTREACH, AND COMMUNICATION.

APPENDIX C-1



Doulas Ministries Inc.

P. O. Box 700215

Fax 305-258-4491

Phone 305-258-4807

Miami, Florida 33170-0215

Email Doulasministries@bellsouth.net

September 4, 2003

Miami-Dade County Public Housing
 Ms. Dale Poster-Ellis
 1401 NW 7th St.
 Miami, Fl. 33125

REQUEST FOR PARTNERSHIP – SERVICE PROVIDER

Dear Ms. Poster-Ellis,

The purpose of this letter is three fold. The first is to request a partnership with Miami-Dade County Public Housing. The second, to obtain approval to provide Adult Literacy Classes and Homework Assistance / Tutoring and other services to residents of either Perrine Rainbow / Perrine Gardens Housing Developments. The third is to obtain an allotment of space at the housing development where the services will be available.

All services (see included brochure) rendered will be free to the residents because financing is to be public and privately funded grants.

The approach is to walk with parents and children through a program that will not only ensure academic improvement but character development.

The goal of Doulas Ministries Inc. is not only to equip the family member with the skills needed for academic improvement but also with the consciousness needed for ethical and moral decision making, citizenship, social accountability, and spiritual transformation.

The mission of Doulas Ministries Inc. is “*To provide social and ministerial services that promote women, children, and family restoration and preservation by education, counseling, residential & mentoring programs, holistic wellness, economic stability, and personal and communal responsibility.*” I am committed to families and individuals with a need and desire to improve, even though they may lack the skills or resources to do so.

In addition, and most importantly, participation in the spiritual element of Doulas Ministries is strictly voluntary, does not, and will not affect an individual or family’s ability to access all services and benefits.

Please call me at 305-258-4807 or 305-302-9520.

PRA YERFULLY YOURS,

Loretha Mathis

APPENDIX C-2

**Doulas Ministries Inc.**

P. O. Box 700215

Miami, Florida 33170-0215

Fax 305-258-4491

Phone 305-258-4807

doulasministries@bellsouth.net

Ms. Dee Walton
 Miami Dade Housing Authority
 26201 SW 139th Ct.
 Naranja, Fl.

November 10, 2003

Dear Ms. Walton,

Thank you for giving Doulas Ministries Inc. (DMI), the opportunity to meet with you and demonstrate our sincere desire to become a service provider to residents of the Miami Dade Housing Authority (MDHA).

Our desire is for a long term relationship that will allow us to mentor families. Our belief is that the fundamental success of the family is inherently linked to education.

The interest in MDHA results from studying family, village, and community interaction and growth. I have developed a model, which was designed specifically with MDHA Project residents in mind.

The family educational concept is an approach from a multi-generational literacy perspective. The goal is to mentor families individually / collectively through education.

The community concept is to provide activities/ events that engage the family and the community for the purpose of improving citizenship, tolerance, and cohesiveness.

As you can well see this program requires long term commitment, which is our pledge and promise. In addition to the information above my Cell Number is 305-302-9520.

Attached is a basic outline of the service project we wish to provide. Specific activity steps are in place if you have a grant application that needs to be completed.

Sincerely,

 Loretha Mathis
 President

Cc: Mr. R. Perez, Director Public Housing
 File

APPENDIX C-3**Doulas Ministries Inc.**

P. O. Box 700215

Fax 305-258-4491

Miami, Florida 33170-0215

Phone 305-258-4807

doulasministries@bellsouth.net**THE CHAVVAH PROJECT****COVER SHEET**

December 26, 2003

Doulas Ministries Inc. (DMI)

The funds requested will be used to provide Family Interactive Literacy Classes and Activities to residents of the Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens Housing Developments.

Loretha Mathis
Doulas Ministries Inc.
12375 SW 220 St.
Miami, Fl. 33170-2859

305-302-9520 – Cell
305-258-4807 – Ph.
305-258-4491 – Fax

Email: doulasministries@bellsouth..net

501C3 Organization, September 2002.

Annual Budget Attached: \$75,240.00



Doulas Ministries Inc.

P. O. Box 700215

Fax 305-258-4491

Phone 305-258-4807

Miami, Florida 33170-0215

doulasministries@bellsouth.net

December 26, 2003

Ms. Dee Walton
 Miami Dade Housing Authority
 26201 SW 139th Ct.
 Naranja, Fl.

Dear Ms. Walton,

Again, thank you for giving Doulas Ministries Inc. (DMI) the opportunity to offer this proposal for residential services. We are looking forwards to partnering with you in our efforts to build a better Miami Dade Housing Community.

If you have a *more* formal administrative procedure or format that is required for proposal submission please let us know and we will comply with it forth rightly.

The included research data was obtained from the Miami-Dade County Department of Planning, Development, and Regulations, the Office of Community Affairs Office of Black Affairs, the United States Bureau of Census and Population Housing, the Alliance for Human Services Comprehensive Health and Social Services Master Plan 2001-2004, and the Perrine Revitalization Area Profile.

This proposal also contains a Ten Day (Dec.1-Dec. 10, 2003) Onsite Specific Needs Assessment Survey of Residents living in the Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens Housing Project. Additionally, DMI is in the process of collaborating with R.R. Moton Elementary, the school that serves the Circle Plaza /Rainbow Gardens community.

We appreciate your willingness to work with us.

Sincerely,

Loretha Mathis, President

Cc: Mr. R. Perez, Director Public Housing
 File



Doulas Ministries Inc.

P. O. Box 700215

Fax 305-258-4491

Phone 305-258-4807

Miami, Florida 33170-0215

doulasministries@bellsouth.net

December 26, 2003

Ms. Dee Walton
 Miami Dade Housing Authority
 26201 SW 139th Ct.
 Naranja, Fl.

Dear Ms. Walton,

As per our meeting on November 10, 2003, at the Circle Plaza / Rainbow Village Housing Projects from December 1, 2003 through December 10, 2003 between the hours of 9AM to 1PM a specific Needs Assessment survey was performed.* The actual survey, data collection and this analysis was designed, performed, and prepared by Loretha Mathis. The following is a breakdown of the responses to the survey.

Distinctiveness / Family

- There was a total of 30 respondents: 29 Females and 1 Male
- Eight of the Females that responded have children less than two years old
- One respondent was a retired school bus driver
- Concerning the FCAT 10 parents responded
 - 5 reported having children that had failed the FCAT
 - 10 stated that if they were taught how to help their children with homework they would
- Only 18 of the respondents answered questions concerning family members.
 - 1 respondent was childless but pregnant
 - 1 was childless and not pregnant
 - 1 opted not to answer
 - 15 dropped out of high school have 35 children among themselves.
- Concerning marital status
 - 2 survey respondents were married
 - 1 survey respondent was divorced
 - 25 survey respondents are single
 - 2 did not respond
- One respondent had no children and dropped out of high school in the 12 Grade for no apparent reason.

Healthiness

- Concerning the overall healthiness of their children
 - 10 stated their children visit the doctor at least once each year
 - 6 stated their children did not receive annual dental exams
- Concerning insurance: of the 15 persons that responded to healthiness questions
 - 4 stated they have no Health Insurance
 - 8 stated they have on Life Insurance
- 11 stated they were none smokers
- Concerning mental state 6 stated they were depressed and did not want to talk about it

Education

- There were a total of 30 respondents and less than .9%, (3 persons) had a high school diploma
- Of the 27 respondents without a high school diploma 15 respondents, 56.25% signed up for Adult Basis Education / GED Classes.
- Of the 56.25% that signed up for the class 100% stated a need for tutors and to this end and as funds become available DMI is committed to hiring tutors that will be sensitive to the circumstances of MDHA residents
- Of the 3 respondents that had a high school diploma 2 expressed a desire to be considered for employment with Doulas Ministries Inc. (DMI)
- To this end as funds become available Miami Dade Housing Authority residents that meet job qualifications will be given *priority hiring status* in support of DMI's Community Building efforts.

Economics

- Only 5 of the 30 respondents are employed and 2 of them stated they are behind in their rent. The other 25 respondents (83% are unemployed.)
- Only 1 of the 29 Females stated they received regular Child Support Payments
- Concerning Electrical service 3 respondents reported had been disconnected within the last year. Two of the are unemployed
- 25 respondents stated that various circumstances in life have taught them the value of education.

Spirituality

- Only 16 persons responded to the Spirituality questions
- Concerning specific activities respondents stated
 - 9 attend church regularly
 - 6 did not attend church at all
 - 14 pray regularly and 2 do not pray at all
- Concerning their children spirituality
 - 8 reported that their children do not attend church
 - 12 reported they wanted their children to attend church
 - 2 did not want their children to attend church
 - 7 stated their children already attend church

** Though this is a small sample, it is believed that these statistics are paradigmatic of the overall conditions at Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens Housing Development. Additionally, several items were not examined in this survey (i.e. Crime: Fraud, Domestic Violence, Robbery) but will be later pending MDHA's determination concerning the attached proposal*

SUBMITTED BY

Loretha Mathis
Doulas Ministries Inc.

Cc: Mr. R. Perez, Director Public Housing

A. Project Abstract

The focus of DMI is *Inter-generational Literacy*, which is the uninterrupted generational dropping out of High School. The illiteracy element is sometimes characterized by the fact that parents and their children are high school dropouts. The inter-generational element is that children of the aforementioned parents are now at risk of becoming high school dropouts too. Academic and other skills needed to support the education and development of children are lacking in dropout parents. The DMI approach to Inter-generational illiteracy is based on the education process as a specific family activity.

The Chavvah Project addresses family preservation and restoration through education by challenging the Inter-Generational Illiteracy the plagues residents in the West Perrine area, specifically Miami-Dade Housing Authority (MDHA) residents. Given that MDHA Projects are walled, sub-communities within the larger community of West Perrine, the approach is to enter the context of Circle Plaza / Rainbow Village Miami-Dade Housing Project, and address three areas: 1) Provide Adult Basis Education Classes. 2) Facilitate bonding between parents and children through ground-breaking Interactive Educational Activities, and 3) Facilitate activities that promote inter-family communication by giving parent and child opportunities to celebrate successes, especially those based on the child's observation / modeling of the parent's study habits and attitude toward education.

B. Program and Community Need -

The importance of education to family preservation and restoration is confirmed by statistics such as 48 percent of Perrine residents above the age of 18 failed to complete high school, the teen birth rate is above 12%, and child maltreatment/ abuse cases are increasing along with the number of children entering school without Basis Readiness Skills.

Perrine ranks 12 out of 34 in rates and cases of “child maltreatment, child protective investigations, verified child abuse, WAGES recipients, TANF recipients, food stamps recipients, and birth to teenage mothers.

The Social Services Master Plan (SSMP), Youth and Families Provider Survey: noted that Primary Prevention services should include “Family life skills education; skills to equip (women) to break cycles of addiction, violence, etc” and complementary to this Early Intervention services should include “Basic Education, and Educational and Vocational Assessments. Education was consistently linked to prevention, intervention and aftercare for Children, Youth, and families. Children, Youth, and Families Priority of School Readiness stated “Promote tutoring, mentoring, and educational success with parent involvement, Parenting Skills Training in the home or community setting, and provide support services that promote family preservation” Concerning the goal of safe and supportive communities The Alliance for Human Services recommended Neighborhood Empowerment Projects that included direct parent involvement in the education of their children. DMI’ Chavvah Project is an Adult Education effort that pivots on parental and family interaction through reading, homework, and social activities. Clearly the Alliance for Human Services finds literacy crucial to obtaining the life skills necessary for the success of children, youth, family, and community.

C. Experience and Organizational Capacity

Programmatic and fiscal oversight responsibility for the Chavvah project belongs to the Program's Executive Director, Loretha Mathis, who holds a Miami Dade County Public Schools Educator's Certificate # 025530, in Adult Part-Time Academic Education, which is valid through June 30, 2006. Additionally Ms. Mathis certified as a Substitute Degreed Teacher through June 2005 and has a statement of eligibility for certification in English (Grades 5-9).

Concerning management ability it is noteworthy that when Ms. Mathis became the Program Manager for a local Homework and Tutorial Program the grantors were threatening to withdraw funding; and in 2 years Ms. Mathis turned that program into a model which recently was awarded funding for 2004-2007.

While working on the Master's thesis "The Restoration of an Incest Victim" in 2000, Ms. Mathis, taught classes on Parenting, Anger Management, Conflict Resolution, and HIV/AIDS at the Agape Women Center, where she also conducted weekly group sessions for convicted/ abused/ victimized/ addicted women. In the Year 2000, Ms. Mathis was honored as an Outstanding Volunteer by the Miami Rescue Mission.

E. Organizational Profile

DMI began in 1991, the result of its founder's call into ministry to specifically address painful childhood experiences that included abandonment, incest, parental divorce, step-parent / sibling indifference, and sexual, physical, and emotional abuse. The goal was to help children enduring the secrets of these abuses to educate themselves in order to prevent their children from having to endure the same dilemma. The founder retired from Nuclear Power and returned to school to obtain education that would enable her to provide social and ministerial services to people whom she could identify with (expected to receive doctorate in May 2004) In early 2002 DMI was officially organized as a 501C3 (Determination Letter attached) to address the unmet needs of single, working mothers, their children and especially their unprepared or protected daughters

DMI'S Mission is “To provide social and ministerial services that promote women, children, and family restoration and preservation through education, counseling, residential, & mentoring programs for holistic wellness, economic stability, and personal responsibility.” **Our goal** is to preserve and restore women, children, families, and communities by relieving the human suffering caused by illiteracy, intolerance, and indifference.

Documentation Policy: All services rendered must be properly documented. This requirement will be satisfied by use of one or more of the following: Attendance Logs, Family Literacy Inter-Activity Sheets, Parental Consent Forms, Quarterly Reports / Surveys, Completed Test Log and/or Tutor/Consultant Activity Logs. All documentation and client information will be kept in a secure access controlled manner.

F. Target Community / Population

The **demographic target population*** is residents of the Perrine Gardens / Rainbow Housing Project at 10161 Circle Plaza West, Perrine, Florida 33157. In Perrine the percent of family households headed by a female householder (43 Percent) was nearly three times the county's 15 percent and among those households with children, 77 Percent are headed by a single parent (most of them women.) A high 75 percent of female-householder households with children were below the poverty level in 1990. SSMP, ranked Perrine #12 out of 34 in order of need for priority services. Economically, “Perrine is a small, Black community in unincorporated South Miami-Dade. It is a *low-income and high poverty area*; and between 1980 and 1990 the poverty rate for persons grew from 41 to 55 percent.^{83“} Over 90 percent of the children less than five years old in the Perrine area are poor.

⁸³ Perrine Revitalization Area Profile (1998), Miami-Dade County Department of Planning, Development, and Regulations (Research Division).

Concerning education, 48 percent of Perrine residents above the age of 18 failed to complete high school. “A higher proportion of residents of Perrine (35 percent) are enrolled in elementary and high school.⁸⁴ Large enrollments, high drop out rates and low education attainment statistics support the Chavvah Project Plan for family restoration and preservation through education. The Small Area Statistical Report Neighborhood Indicators, October 28, 2003 ranked West Perrine #1 in Teen Births @ the rate of 12.21%.⁸⁵ This predicts the need for ABE, Life Skill and Personal Development Training.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

G. Proposed Services

- 1. Adult Basic Education / Literacy Classes**
 - Will be offered 2-3 times a week
 - Flexible scheduling (one weekend classes)
 - Tutoring by appointment
- 2. Family Literacy Activity (Relation)**
- 3. Family Recreational Activity (Relaxation)**

F. Scope of Services* 1st Quarter

- 1. Conduct Needs Assessment**
 - a. Analyze Data
 - b. Submit Report / Proposal
- 2. Registration Assessment**
 - a. Family Profile

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Small Area Rankings by Neighborhood Indicators, Alliance for Human Services Addendum #1 CBO NOFA for FY 2004-2007

- b. Education Needs assessment
- 3. Sponsor Open House
 - a. Formally invite school & community leaders and residents
 - b. Utilize Flyers / Attend local community meetings
 - c. Introduce Organization / Board / Overview Program Goals
- 4. Recruit volunteers / Obtain Funding Source
 - a. Recruit Tutors (pending availability of funds)
- 5. Submit Quarterly Report

2nd and 3rd Quarter

- 1. Classes Begin
- 2. Review participants progress
- 3. Facilitate Parent / Child Interactive Educational Activities
 - a. You Read - I Listen[®]
 - b. Read About it – Rap About it[®]
- 4. Quarterly Family & Individual Activity Award / Incentive
 - a. Field Trip
 - b. Incentive - Movie Tickets / Fast food Certificates / etc.

4th Quarter

- 1. Year end evaluation on each active family / participant's progress
- 2. Registration and preparation for expansion of services to include children

* Contains Copyright Materials

H. Community Support / Commitment / Consciousness

The success of the services is assured by several items.

- 1. R.R. Moton Community School, the primary Elementary School for Circle Plaza / Rainbow Gardens has agreed to partner with DMI and actively support the Chavvah Projects Parent /Child Interactive Reading Programs.
- 2. DMI will help ensure residents interest in the program by giving MDHA residents hiring priority (when possible).

3. Community commitment – DMI is asking MDHA to allocate one of the site's units for the Chavvah Project.
4. Community Consciousness – An Advisory Board will be created and composed of MDHA residents / parents, and local school / community volunteers or leaders.
5. Letters of Support are available

DOULAS MINISTRIES INC.
THE CHAVVAH PROJECT
February 1, 2004 - January 31, 2005
Proposed Budget

					Total
<i>PERSONNEL – Employee</i>					
Regular –Salaries			Bi- Weekly		
Program Instructor (1)	26		1000.00		\$27,100.00
2 Tutors @ 20hr ea. = 2x 40x 12.00/hr	26		960.00	X 26	\$24960.00
Bookkeeper 3hrs/ wk @ 25/hr = 6x \$25.	26		150		\$3900.00
					\$
Subtotal Salaries			0		\$55,960.00
<i>Fringe Benefits</i>					
Fica: 27,100 x.0620=1680			64.62		\$1680.00
Subtotal Fringe			0.00		\$1680.00
Total Personnel			0.00		\$57,640
<i>Contractual Services</i>					
External Audit		0	0.00	0	\$1200.00
Environmental Audit		0	0.00	0	0
Other Professional-Svc. Const. Mgm.		0	0.00	0	0
Other Professional Svc.		0	0.00	0	\$0.00
Bottled Water		0	0.00	0	\$0.00
Rent Copier		0	0.00	0	\$1000.00
Building Rental In-kind		0	0.00	0	\$0.00
Total Contractual				0	\$2500.00
<i>Operating Expense</i>					
Telephone Regular			0	0.00	2.500
Telephone Long Distance			0	0.00	300
Postage			0	0.00	100
Utilities			0	0.00	1800.00
Total Operating Expense					\$4,700.00
<i>Capital Expenses</i>					
Textbooks/ Supplies/ Materials		0	0.00	1500	\$1500.00
Office Furniture		0	0.00	2500	\$2500.00
Outside Printing		0	0.00	400	\$400.00
Computer Purchase		0	0.00	5000	\$5000.00
Office supplies/Outside Vendors		0	0.00	1,000	\$1000.00
Total Commodities					\$10,400.00
TOTAL BUDGET		0	0	0	\$75,240.00

Submitted by: _____ Date: _____

BUDGET NARRATIVE

The largest cost item in Doulas Ministries Inc. budget is personnel. The Program Instructor will instruct all subjects, prepare all lesson plans, track all participants progress and be responsible for reporting the program' status to the proper authorities or monitoring agencies. The Program Instructor is required pass a State of Florida Background Check and possesses a Teaching Certificate that is valid for Regular or Substitute Teaching in the Miami-Dade County Public School System or the State of Florida. The program Instructor will be paid at the rate of 500.00 per week and must be available when the office is open / tutoring is taking place.

DMI will be hiring 2 tutors for 20 hours each week at a rate of 12.00 per hour, which is below the customary rate of 12.00 per hour, which is below the standard tutoring rate. Tutors will provide help in all subjects and on all grades levels. Additionally, all tutors must pass a State of Florida Background Check and possess a high school diploma.

The cost of the book keeper is based minimal because the overall plan is to contract actual accounting services in the future.

The cost of Contractual Services is expected to be 2500.00 a year and this cost includes required audits and office equipment rental. Included in the cost will be the contracted Accounting Service.

Operating expenses are also expected to be minimal and stable Basic utilities and communication services are included in the category.

Capital expenses are the one time purchase of office furniture, computers and service agreement. These items are necessary for class and study activities.

APPENDIX D
COMPARATIVE METHODOLOGY CHART

COMPARATIVE METHODOLOGY CHART

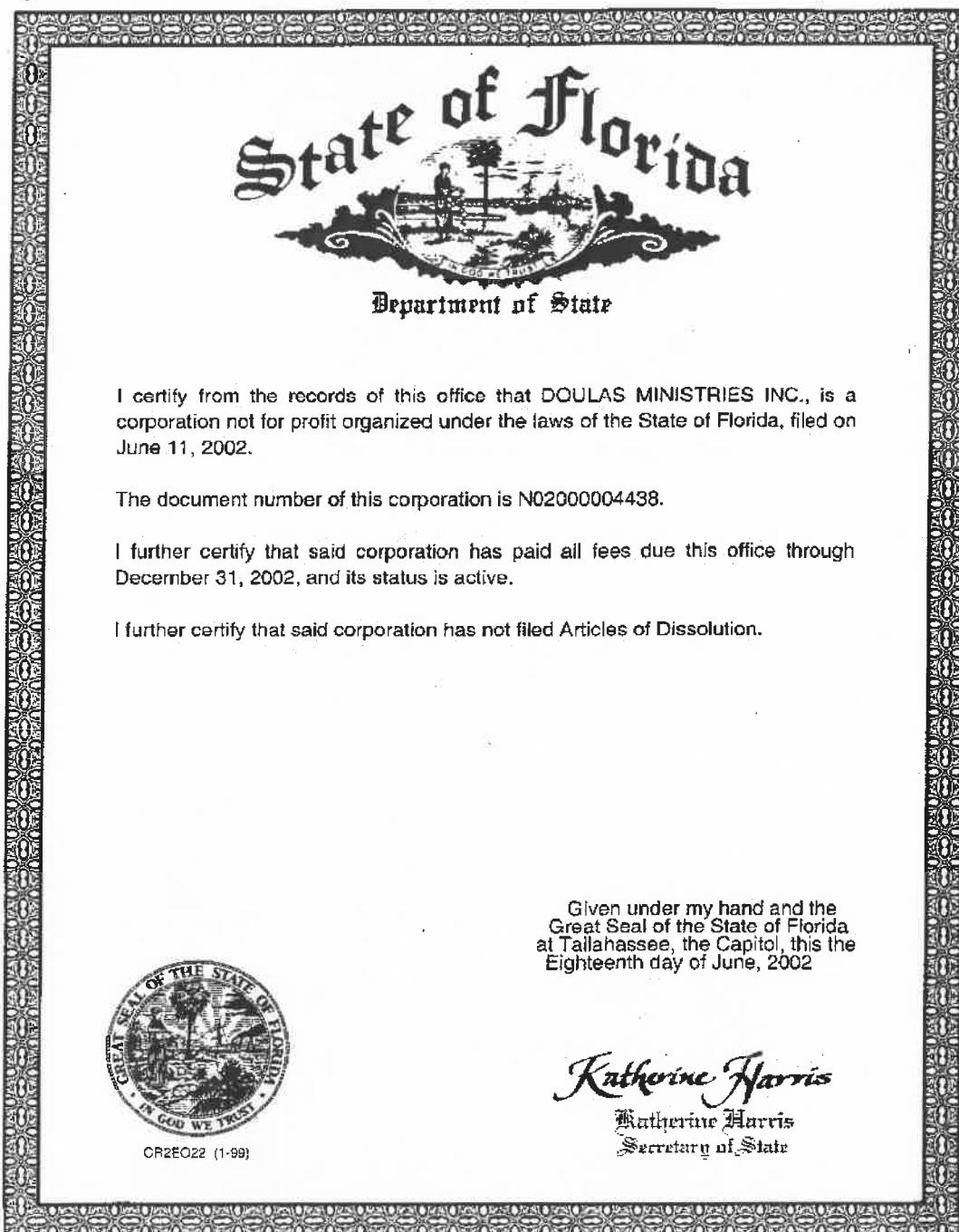
GENERAL EDUCATION TEST PROJECT

THE CHAVVAH

SOCIALIZATION		SPIRITUALIZATION	
INITIATION (POLICY CHANGE)		REALIZATION (GOD HAS A PLAN)	
ADAPTATION (STUDY)		TRANSFORMATION (RENEWED MIND)	
PRESENTATION (ISOLATION & TESTING)		SANCTIFICATION (SEPARATION & PROVING)	
OCCUPATION (SERVING SELF)		RESTORATION (SERVING OTHERS)	
SEPARATION (RETIRE)		PRESERVATION (RELAX)	
		ETERNITY (GLORIFICATION)	

APPENDIX E
INCORPORATION AND IRS DECLARATION

APPENDIX E - 1
STATE INCORPORATION DOCUMENTS



APPENDIX E - 2 TAX EXEMPT DECLARATION

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
P. O. BOX 2508
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: SEP 13 2002

DOULAS MINISTRIES INC
C/O LORETHA MATEIS
12375 SW 220TH ST
MIAMI, FL 33176

Employer Identification Number:
04-3677590
DLN:
17053198004012
Contact Person:
HEATHER N BUSS ID# 31464
Contact Telephone Number:
(877) 829-5500
Accounting Period Ending:
June 30
Foundation Status Classification:
509(a)(1)
Advance Ruling Period Begins:
June 11, 2002
Advance Ruling Period Ends:
June 30, 2006
Addendum Applies:
No

Dear Applicant:

Based on information you supplied, and assuming your operations will be as stated in your application for recognition of exemption, we have determined you are exempt from federal income tax under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization described in section 501(c)(3).

Because you are a newly created organization, we are not now making a final determination of your foundation status under section 509(a) of the Code. However, we have determined that you can reasonably expect to be a publicly supported organization described in sections 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

Accordingly, during an advance ruling period you will be treated as a publicly supported organization, and not as a private foundation. This advance ruling period begins and ends on the dates shown above.

Within 90 days after the end of your advance ruling period, you must send us the information needed to determine whether you have met the requirements of the applicable support test during the advance ruling period. If you establish that you have been a publicly supported organization, we will classify you as a section 509(a)(1) or 509(a)(2) organization as long as you continue to meet the requirements of the applicable support test. If you do not meet the public support requirements during the advance ruling period, we will classify you as a private foundation for future periods. Also, if we classify you as a private foundation, we will treat you as a private foundation from your beginning date for purposes of section 507(d) and 4940.

Grantors and contributors may rely on our determination that you are not a private foundation until 90 days after the end of your advance ruling period. If you send us the required information within the 90 days, grantors and contributors may continue to rely on the advance determination until we make

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DOULAS MINISTRIES INC

a final determination of your foundation status.

If we publish a notice in the Internal Revenue Bulletin stating that we will no longer treat you as a publicly supported organization, grantors and contributors may not rely on this determination after the date we publish the notice. In addition, if you lose your status as a publicly supported organization, and a grantor or contributor was responsible for, or was aware of, the act or failure to act, that resulted in your loss of such status, that person may not rely on this determination from the date of the act or failure to act. Also, if a grantor or contributor learned that we had given notice that you would be removed from classification as a publicly supported organization, then that person may not rely on this determination as of the date he or she acquired such knowledge.

If you change your sources of support, your purposes, character, or method of operation, please let us know so we can consider the effect of the change on your exempt status and foundation status. If you amend your organizational document or bylaws, please send us a copy of the amended document or bylaws. Also, let us know all changes in your name or address.

As of January 1, 1984, you are liable for social security taxes under the Federal Insurance Contributions Act on amounts of \$100 or more you pay to each of your employees during a calendar year. You are not liable for the tax imposed under the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA).

Organizations that are not private foundations are not subject to the private foundation excise taxes under Chapter 42 of the Internal Revenue Code. However, you are not automatically exempt from other federal excise taxes. If you have any questions about excise, employment, or other federal taxes, please let us know.

Donors may deduct contributions to you as provided in section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to you or for your use are deductible for Federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of sections 2055, 2106, and 2522 of the Code.

Donors may deduct contributions to you only to the extent that their contributions are gifts, with no consideration received. Ticket purchases and similar payments in conjunction with fundraising events may not necessarily qualify as deductible contributions, depending on the circumstances. Revenue Ruling 67-246, published in Cumulative Bulletin 1967-2, on page 104, gives guidelines regarding when taxpayers may deduct payments for admission to, or other participation in, fundraising activities for charity.

You are not required to file Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax, if your gross receipts each year are normally \$25,000 or less. If you receive a Form 990 package in the mail, simply attach the label provided, check the box in the heading to indicate that your annual gross receipts are normally \$25,000 or less, and sign the return. Because you will be treated as a public charity for return filing purposes during your entire advance ruling period, you should file Form 990 for each year in your advance ruling period.

Letter 1045 (DO/CG)

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DOULAS MINISTRIES INC

that you exceed the \$25,000 filing threshold even if your sources of support do not satisfy the public support test specified in the heading of this letter.

If a return is required, it must be filed by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of your annual accounting period. A penalty of \$20 a day is charged when a return is filed late, unless there is reasonable cause for the delay. However, the maximum penalty charged cannot exceed \$10,000 or 5 percent of your gross receipts for the year, whichever is less. For organizations with gross receipts exceeding \$1,000,000 in any year, the penalty is \$100 per day per return, unless there is reasonable cause for the delay. The maximum penalty for an organization with gross receipts exceeding \$1,000,000 shall not exceed \$50,000. This penalty may also be charged if a return is not complete. So, please be sure your return is complete before you file it.

You are not required to file federal income tax returns unless you are subject to the tax on unrelated business income under section 511 of the Code. If you are subject to this tax, you must file an income tax return on Form 990-T, Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return. In this letter we are not determining whether any of your present or proposed activities are unrelated trade or business as defined in section 513 of the Code.

You are required to make your annual information return, Form 990 or Form 990-EZ, available for public inspection for three years after the later of the due date of the return or the date the return is filed. You are also required to make available for public inspection your exemption application, any supporting documents, and your exemption letter. Copies of these documents are also required to be provided to any individual upon written or in person request without charge other than reasonable fees for copying and postage. You may fulfill this requirement by placing these documents on the Internet. Penalties may be imposed for failure to comply with these requirements. Additional information is available in Publication 557, Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization, or you may call our toll free number shown above.

You need an employer identification number even if you have no employees. If an employer identification number was not entered on your application, we will assign a number to you and advise you of it. Please use that number on all returns you file and in all correspondence with the Internal Revenue Service.

If we said in the heading of this letter that an addendum applies, the addendum enclosed is an integral part of this letter.

Because this letter could help us resolve any questions about your exempt status and foundation status, you should keep it in your permanent records.

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DOULAS MINISTRIES INC

If you have any questions, please contact the person whose name and telephone number are shown in the heading of this letter.

Sincerely yours,

Lois G. Lerner

for Lois G. Lerner
Director, Exempt Organizations

Enclosure(s):
Form 872-C

Letter 1045 (DO/CG)

APPENDIX F
DOULAS MINISTRIES INC. MISSION STATEMENT & LOGO



Doulas Ministries Inc.

MISSION STATEMENT

Provide social & ministerial services that promote women, children, and family restoration & preservation by education, counseling, residential & mentoring programs for holistic wellness, economic stability, and personal responsibility

APPENDIX G
LETTERS OF SUPPORT



Board of County Commissioners
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY - FLORIDA
DISTRICT 9

DENNIS G. MOSS
COMMISSIONER

January 7, 2004

Ms. Loretta Medris
Dorcas Ministries Inc.
201 22nd AVENUE
MIAMI, FL 33170

Dear Ms. Medris:

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of support for the Chayvah Project, since that they have implemented and produced excellent programs for our children Miami-Dade County. Motivating today's youth can be a challenging undertaking any organization that can achieve that goal should be highly commended. The education of our youth should not only fall in our teacher's hands but also the parents and events the community, the Chayvah Project shows this to us.

As County Commissioner of District 9, I commend the members of the Chayvah Project for the work that they have done in Miami-Dade County and encourage them to keep the good work.

Dennis G. Moss
Dennis G. Moss
Miami-Dade County Commissioner
District 9



Greater Goulds Optimist Club

11025 S. W. 223 Street
Goulds, Florida 33170
(305) 255-9747

OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL.

JL. Dempa, Jr., President

Arthur Wallace, Vice President

Lorenzo Williams, Vice President
Kimberly P. Dempa, Secretary/Treasurer

November 18, 2003

Loretha Mathis, President
Douglas Ministries
12375 SW 220 Street
Goulds, FL 33170

Dear Mrs. Mathis:

The Greater Goulds Optimist Club is proud to associate with your organization. You are an asset to our Reading, Resistance, Recreation Program as a Program Manager.

Because of our own tutorial/homework program we recognize the need for parental involvement. And in order for parents to help their children with their homework, they must be literate.

We support your efforts to obtain grant funding to provide adult literacy services to adults who are in need of these services.

We wish you success in the submission of your grant proposal to the Alliance for Human Services.

Sincerely,

Enid W. Dempa
Enid W. Dempa
Executive Director

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